Zeitschrift für Kanada-Studien

Im Auftrag der
Gesellschaft für Kanada-Studien
herausgegeben von

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Indigenous Knowledges and Academic Discourses

Les savoirs autochtones et les discours scientifiques

Indigenes Wissen und akademische Diskurse

Sonderband

Wißner

Articles appearing in this Journal are abstracted and indexed in

HISTORICAL ABSTRACTS and AMERICA: HISTORY AND LIFE.

Einzelpreis 19,80 €

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über http://dnb.dnb.de abrufbar.

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek
The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the Internet at http://dnb.dnb.de.

ISSN 0944-7008
ISBN 978-3-95786-147-4

Redaktion und Lektorat: Dr. Michael Friedrichs, Lektorat Französisch: Dr. Nina Reuther

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Richard Atleo

Foreword

I bring to my present mind the GKS conference in Grainau in February 2014. To begin my contribution to this issue on Indigenous knowledges I sing a chant because it is the ancient Nuu-chah-nulth way of wholeness. I was born into this way, into a traditional house filled with traditional knowledge, which provides a theoretical framework to my presentation. When I came into being, Canada was preoccupied with the WWII in Europe, which meant that my home of Ahousaht, located in an isolated area, without roads, electricity, radio, and other modern conveniences, remained unmolested[1]. Consequently, for the first formative years, my entire outlook on life depended on this ancient way of knowing. This way of life is found within a philosophical framework that is animated by story, known to the outside world as myth.

Son of Raven's quest for the light is one such story. The problem then, as with our own day, was about how to live, which translates into how to access resources for living. What should the first beings do? They needed the light kept in a box by the Chief Wolf that lived across the great waters. First they selected Son of Deer to dance for the Chief Wolf that owned the light, and when this dance-strategy failed they attempted a series of similar tactics to trick the Chief Wolf and take some of the light so that they could live. Then, Wren, the *One Who Speaks Wisdom*, advised Son of Raven to become a tiny, tiny leaf and float in the Chief Wolf's spring well so that when the Chief's daughter came for a drink she would be made to swallow this tiny leaf and Son of Raven would then be born into the Chief Wolf's household. After some time growing up in this household Son of Raven successfully brought home not only the light, but also the box in which the light was kept. This is why Raven to this day can be seen to enjoy the delicacies on any given beach at low tide.[2] This story is so profound and complex that it is never possible to explain its fullness of thought and philosophy during any single presentation. Here is one brief interpretation to this story that parallels my oral presentation to the GKS conference on "Indigenous knowledges and Academic Discourses."

1 This apt word was used in the Royal Proclamation of 1763, which said in part: "And whereas it is just and reasonable […] that the several Nations or Tribes of Indians with whom We are connected, and who live under our Protection, should not be molested."

2 Cf. a more comprehensive version of this story in Richard Atleo, *Tsawalk: A Nuu-chah-nulth Worldview.* Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004. 6-10.

Son of Raven's quest for the light has a simple interpretation at its surface. What is very strange about this story is that further probing into its meaning unveils a paradox that mirrors recent scientific[3] findings. The initial level of analysis of the story parallels the empirical focus on the theory of evolution that is expressed as *survival of the fittest*. This interpretation observes that the strong take by force whatever is wanted, seemingly without regard for law and order. In other words, the notion of *survival of the fittest* suggests that reality is lawless, without purpose, and governed by randomness. This scientific interpretation of reality is the same interpretation made by Son of Raven, which is clearly indicated by the kind of strategies employed to secure the light. These lawless strategies prompted outsiders to call this story "How Son of Raven Stole the Light." However, the strategy suggested by Wren, the *One Who Speaks Wisdom*, is the one that succeeds and it is this feature of the story that begins to unveil a deeper truth.

It is this deeper truth to the story that became the foundation and framework to a Nuu-chah-nulth way of life. It is the reason that ancient Nuu-chah-nulth became a Potlatch people, which is a way of life centered on a *sacred giving* ceremony. The dances and songs of this ceremony are known as *hinkiits*, a word that describes a *ceremonial process* of giving. Now if the recently imposed title "How Son of Raven Stole the Light" was the only possible truth of the story, then there arises a contradiction. How can a story that seems to celebrate a worldview based on force, deception, trickery, and stealing be taken as the foundation to the *sacred-giving* ways of a Potlatch people? When the story of Son of Raven is examined again to probe for its deeper secrets, there begins to emerge another level of truth. It is provided by the advice given by Wren, the *One Who Speaks Wisdom*, that Son of Raven transform himself into a tiny, tiny leaf and float in the Chief Wolf's spring well. This transformation enables Son of Raven to be born into the family of the Chief Wolf and in so doing he becomes a legal[4] member of the Chief's household. These events unveil a parable that affirms the paradoxical nature of reality that I call polarity. On the surface of things, Son of Raven and the first community of beings observed a reality

3 In my first two books, *Tsawalk: A Nuu-chah-nulth Worldview* (2004) and *Principles of Tsawalk: An Indigenous Approach to Global Crisis* (2011), a Nuu-chah-nulth philosophy and its interpretation into contemporary constitutional terms of respect, consent, recognition, and continuity is presented. The third book, in press, completes the Tsawalk trilogy and is a discourse on the nature of being. Indigenous knowledge cannot be presented in its wholeness without integrating it into other knowledge systems, in precisely the same way that recent scientific advances are now beginning to integrate, first the universe of matter and energy and now a potential universe of consciousness in the study of the autopoetic nature found in the world of atoms and in the world of galaxies. In the Nuu-chah-nulth language this emerging theme of the unity of creation is expressed as *tsawalk – everything is one, interconnected and interrelated*.

4 Paradox is common to Nuu-chah-nulth storytelling and is accepted as a mystery inherent to reality. The paradox in this instance is the contrast between the *process* of stealing and the *process* of achieving legal-status by being "born again" into the Chief's household, which in the Nuu-chah-nulth language is more commonly expressed as transformation.

that appeared to be fragmented, disconnected, and not interrelated. This appearance of reality logically inferred an evolutionary process of *survival of the fittest* by any means, whether by trickery, deception, or force. On the other hand, the deeper meaning of this story also affirms the apparent contradiction of reality: reality is also governed by natural law where boundaries must be respected in order to access resources and where citizenship by birth provides legal membership. Son of Raven's birth into the household of resources illustrates what is possible.

At this deeper level of analysis, not only does the story indicate natural law[5] but it also indicates *purpose* that is astonishingly intimate and nourishing. This latter conclusion becomes clear when it is realized that Son of Raven was allowed to become a member of the Chief's household. Not in this story, but significantly connected to it, is another name of the Chief, *Kwaaʔuuċ*, which means *Owner of That Which Is*, or Creator. In other words, because Son of Raven, as a physical being, becomes a family member in the house of the Chief Wolf, a metaphysical being, the apparent divide between the physical and spiritual domains is resolved. This synchrony between the physical and metaphysical is both relational and nourishing. It is at this deeper interpretation of the story of Son of Raven that the vision quest, the process of acquiring knowledge and power, is defined by allegory. Access to the source of light cannot be effectively done by force, deception, or trickery but according to the demands of natural law. The successful strategy employed by Son of Raven to gain access to resources needed for life is the same principle employed by the Nuu-chah-nulth method of the vision quest. Son of Raven, as an archetypal being, finds successful access to the light by assuming an identity of insignificance in the context of an infinite creation. *Insignificance* is a true identity of *being* defined by humility and is a necessary prerequisite for anyone who desires successful access to the source of light.

In summary, the story of Son of Raven is a reflection, in principle, of the relationship between the visible world and invisible world, the empirical domain and spiritual domain, which in modern language is represented by science and religion. It suggests that effective communication and understanding between apparent divides, such as between physical and metaphysical domains, can be facilitated more effectively when beings become aware of their natural identity[6] in the face of an

5 Paradox is integrated throughout the story of Son of Raven's quest for the light. No separation or dichotomy is assumed about the nature of reality, such as is found in other knowledge systems. The Nuu-chah-nulth worldview represents a different framework that is not either-or but one that accepts the natural tension between creation and destruction, between day and night, between all the apparent contradictions of reality such as stealing and giving. Son of Raven is a being who appears capable of both illegal and legal acts, which is permitted and allowed by Creation.

6 Identity is defined here in the context of Creation and becomes a metaphorical lens through which to perceive Creation in such a way that an inflated sense of identity has the same effect as a distorted lens. In one story, Son of Raven observes Eagle's spectacular fishing-strategy and

infinite existence. The story of Son of Raven indicates that to take what is wanted by force, trickery, and other illegal means is an option; but so too is the higher road of knowing oneself in the context of eternity and infinity and subsequently, by employing the method of vision questing, discovering a natural means to access the necessary resources for living.

Interpretation of the story of Son of Raven is paradoxical and reflects the condition of human activities such as the GKS conference held in Grainau, Germany. The Grainau conference indicates a paradigmatic shift away from colonialism that sought to unify peoples via a hegemonic mind-set, which is otherwise a denial of diversity. The story of Son of Raven in its preservation of the oppositional nature of reality offers the beginning to a workable solution to the recent divide between Indigenous knowledge systems and other knowledge systems. To this present time the world order remains governed by a belief in reality that assumes a philosophy of *survival of the fittest*. The theme of Indigenous knowledges of the Grainau conference may represent part of a growing opposition to this present world order, which includes not only the global environmental movement but also new scientific research in physics and evolutionary biology from which is emerging another interpretation of reality that echoes the interpretation of the story of Son of Raven. Aided and encouraged by scientific advances, Edgar Mitchell, the US astronaut, founded the Noetic Science Institute as a result of his experiences while in space. Studying metaphysical philosophy, the Noetic Science Institute represents one example of a move towards an integration of reality as reflected in the story of Son of Raven. This is one example of the meaning of *Tsawalk: A Nuu-chah-nulth Worldview* (Atleo 2004) where diversity is transformed into an *enrichment of wholeness*, which now requires the kind of encouragement for healthy growth provided by those who attended the GKS conference in Grainau, Germany. These scientific advances, in part, affirm the unity of the physical universe governed by natural law, which, when complemented and supported by Indigenous knowledge, can include the potential of an intimate, nourishing relationship with the source of light.

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when he copies Eagle's strategy he effectively inflates his own identity and thereby distorts his perception, which guarantees his failure.

Kerstin Knopf

Introduction

At the International Day for Biological Diversity in New York City in May 2007 UN official John Scott asked "governments and parties to 'respect' Indigenous knowledge and culture." He thus added political pressure to the movement to include Indigenous knowledges[1] and practices into our academic and scientific discourses that had gained momentum since the late 1990s. In several parts of the world, Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars call for 'indigenizing the academy,'[2] mainly in response to a large-scale dismissal of Indigenous knowledges in Western discourses.

The Mi'kmaw scholar Marie Battiste is one of the most determined researchers on Indigenous knowledges and education in Canada. She explains:

> Indigenous knowledge comprises the complex set of technologies developed and sustained by Indigenous civilizations. Often oral and symbolic, it is transmitted through the structure of Indigenous languages and passed on to the next generation through modeling, practice, and animation, rather than through the written word. […] It is a knowledge system in its own right with its own internal consistency and ways of knowing, and there are limits to how far it can be comprehended from a

1 There is no widely accepted definition of the concept of 'Indigenous', in part because of the great diversity of Indigenous people worldwide; neither has the UN adopted an official definition. The UN works with the following guidelines that serve to approximate the concept and that are employed here as well: self-identification as indigenous peoples at the individual level and accepted by the community as their member; historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies; strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources; distinct social, economic or political systems; distinct language, culture and beliefs; form non-dominant groups of society; resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities (United Nations Permanent Forum, n.p.).
This introduction works with a concept of 'knowledge' outlined by Anna-Katharina Hornidge, Anastasiya Shtaltovna and Conrad Schetter, which is based on Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966). It regards everything as knowledge that is perceived as such by and in respective realms of society. This understanding allows identifying multiple knowledges that coexist, overlap, and contradict each other, and/or engage in varied productive dialogues. "It encompasses all types of knowledge mobilized by actors (i.e. everyday versus expert knowledge, routine and formulaic knowledge, tacit versus explicit, local versus global knowledge, etc.)" (Hornidge/Shtaltovna/Schetter 2016, 14).
'Indigenous knowledge' is understood here as Marie Battiste defines.

2 Tuhiwai Smith 1999, Mihesuha/Wilson 2004, Kuokkanen 2007, Wilson 2008, Kovach 2009, Gilliland 2009.

> Eurocentric point of view. […] Indigenous knowledge is an adaptable, dynamic system based on skills, abilities, and problem-solving techniques that change over time depending on environmental conditions. (Battiste 2002, 2, 11)

Battiste thus understands Indigenous knowledge as a knowledge *system*, cultural practices and technologies that are not fixed, as is often assumed in Western thought, but that change continuously and adapt to environments, dynamic cultural influences and political practices. Its premises are grounded in holism and relational worldviews, it defies categorization, and it operates, if we borrow Western categories, in an interdisciplinary and transcultural mode (Battiste 2005, 4).

The epistemic dismissal of Indigenous knowledges comes as a legacy of colonial histories and global neocolonial relations, mainly displaced and unrecognized, where Indigenous social and political structures, knowledges, religions, and philosophies were seen as inferior, insignificant, and even barbaric by the Western world. According to a Western[3] logo-centric and Cartesian understanding of science and knowledge, Indigenous knowledges have largely been viewed as primitive, folkloric, anecdotal, unscientific, and insignificant (cf. Hobson, n.p.; Grenier, 40). However, selected Indigenous ideas and practices were adapted into Western ideas and practices, such as the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederacy that influenced the Constitution of the United States and its democratic principles ("American History Myths Debunked", n.p.; American Indian Institute, n.p.). Indigenous cultures in North America were also idealized in Western romantic literary traditions as much as their relations towards nature and the environment and connected spiritual ideas continue to be idealized by some groups in Western cultures. Indigenous environmental ethics and spiritual thought and practices were specifically appropriated by environmentalist initiatives and organisations, and even misappropriated in esoteric and New Ageist circles. In recent years, Indigenous knowledges were considered as essential in Western studies of Indigenous cultures, literatures, and histories, so called Indigenous studies, which have come to be researched and taught increasingly by Indigenous scholars themselves in the past years. Western knowledge sys-

3 I employ the terms 'Western' and 'Eurocentric" as denoting political, cultural, economic, and intellectual thought and practice with roots in European societies and knowledge traditions that spread throughout the world during the colonial era, and 'non-Western' as denoting thoughts and practices generated in non-European cultures, societies and knowledge traditions.
It is not the intent of this edition to pit Indigenous and non-Indigenous or Western and non-Western cultures, societies, knowledge systems and practices against each other. These concepts themselves cannot be clearly defined and get increasingly blurred through transcultural dynamics in present societies of the globalized world. Rather, the edition seeks to explore epistemological power relations and the relationship between different knowledge systems and their respective practices. Likewise it is not assumed that there are unified Indigenous or Western understandings of knowledge and knowledge practices.

tems are very diverse as much as Indigenous ones. Some strands of science, such as quantum physics, emphasize connectivity and relationality between matter and space or between an object and its universe and the existence of parallel universes and states of any object; some strands of philosophy, such as metaphysics, explore the complexity of the existence of beings and objects, which show certain parallels to holistic Indigenous philosophies and interconnections between the natural and the supernatural. Likewise, some Western scientists and scholars have recognized Indigenous knowledge and accommodated Indigenous ideas. In 1992, Arctic researcher George Hobson writes:

> In terms of the northern experience, science also equates to *traditional* knowledge, and southern scientists must never forget that traditional knowledge *is* science. […] From our scientific ivory towers we tend to ignore basic knowledge that is available to us. However, as southern scientists, it is absolutely necessary that we develop a system to provide traditional knowledge with a "scientific" framework that allows native and scientific knowledge to interact in a complementary fashion. Southern scientists must learn that "western" scientific knowledge and native knowledge and experience both have validity. (Hobson, n.p.; emphasis in original)

Since the 1990s, traditional Indigenous knowledge is gradually accepted as integral part of sciences relating to the environment (Hobson, n.p.); however much work in the way of epistemological recognition has to be done (cf. Kunuk/Mauro 2010). For example, the theoretical physicist David Peat (1994)[4] respectfully merges his understanding of Indigenous knowledges with his own knowledge and discusses integrated anthropology, history, metaphysics, cosmology, and quantum physics, arguing that Western ideas of quantum physics and Indigenous holism have more common premises and ideas than is generally assumed. And yet, Indigenous scholars perceive the Western academy – in all probability empirically-based strands of the academy – as assigning primacy to knowledge based on Western rationality, logic, science, and empirical proof and excluding knowledge based on observation, oral tradition, digressive thinking, and spiritual relations to one's environment, and Indigenous epistemologies as being associated with the latter categories. Therefore, as a Western-based logic suggests, Indigenous knowledges do not belong to the normatized and legitimate materialistic realm of science, reason, and logic. Battiste argues that Western educational institutions have disclaimed Indigenous knowledges and nurtured the belief that non-Western cultures "contribute nothing to the development of knowledge, humanities, arts, science, and technology" (Battiste

4 I thank Birgit Däwes for pointing out to me the works of David Peat and Gregory Cajete.

2005, 2; cf. Grenier 9). She describes this longstanding Eurocentric disclaiming practice as "cognitive imperialism":

> Cognitive imperialism is a form of cognitive manipulation used to disclaim other knowledge bases and values. Validated through one's knowledge base and empowered through public education, it has been the means by which whole groups of people have been denied existence and have had their wealth confiscated. Cognitive imperialism denies people their language and cultural integrity by maintaining the legitimacy of only one language, one culture, and one frame of reference. (9)

This same Eurocentric notion has been applied to other Indigenous knowledges around the world as well. The Sami scholar Rauna Kuokkanen says: "[T]he academy has ignored, overlooked, and dismissed [Indigenous] ontologies – in fact, the academy's structures and discourses are built on the assumption that there only is one episteme, one ontology, one intellectual tradition on which to rely and from which to draw" (3). The African American scholar Gloria Emeagwali terms this practice Eurocentric "intellectual dominance" and holds:

> Several strategies have been used to reinforce the myth that regions outside Europe contributed nothing to the development of science and technology either in terms of hardware or software – the view that historically the majority of the world have been passive recipients of a so-called Western science and technology. (n.p.)

These strategies include the selective omission of information, the Europeanization of non-European scholars and their inventions and scientific documents, double standards of assessment, and manipulation of dates. For example the Syrian/Lebanese sources of the Greek alphabet were invalidated as well as Mayan, Hindu, and Arabic numerals, the idea of zero and algebraic notations that form the basis for contemporary mathematics. Likewise, a comet identified by Chinese astronomers 2,500 years ago is attributed to Haley (Battiste 2005, 2; Emeagwali 2014, n.p.). Hamid Dabashi, Iranian American scholar, provocatively asks with his book title *Can Non-Europeans Think?* (2015), a book where he extends his thoughts on the accepted 'primacy' of European thinkers in what is assumed to be philosophy proper. Western philosophy, with exceptions such as Arthur Schopenhauer's incorporations of Hindu and Buddhist philosophical ideas (Barua 2008) and influences of Indian philosophy on the American transcendentalists (Riepe 1967), largely only recognizes Eurocentric scholars and their work as philosophical thought, with "imperial hubris" relegating historical and contemporary philosophers from the Arab and Muslim world, Africa, Asia, and Latin America to the niche of 'ethnophilosophy', and thus assuring "a sense of [the West's] own universalism and globality" (Dabashi, 36). He says:

> Žižek and his fellow philosophers are oblivious to those [non-Western] geographies because they cannot read any other script, any other map than the colonial script and the colonial map with which Europeans have read and navigated the world; conversely they cannot read any other script or map because they are blinded to alternative geographies that resistance to that colonialism had written and navigated. (10)

This is, according to Walter D. Mignolo, "an unconscious dismissal that has run through the history of the coloniality of power in its epistemic and ontological spheres: the self-assumed Eurocentrism (the world seen, described and mapped from European perspectives and interests)" (2015, ix) – a dismissal he has elsewhere termed "the coloniality of knowledge" after the Peruvian sociologist Aníbal Quijano (Quijano 1992; Mignolo 2007). In a similar vein, the Argentinean philosopher Enrique D. Dussel argues that the phenomena of 'modernity' are understood as exclusively Eurocentric and that Eurocentric knowledges and cultures superseded non-Eurocentric ones, an intellectual development he terms the "Eurocentric paradigm":

> Europe had, according to this paradigm, exceptional *internal* characteristics that allowed it to supersede, through its rationality, all other cultures. […] This thesis, which I will call the "Eurocentric paradigm" (in opposition to the "*world* paradigm"), is the one that has imposed itself not only in Europe and the United States, but also in the entire intellectual world of the world periphery. (Dussel 2003, 53-54; emphasis in original)

Mignolo connects the "coloniality of power (economic and political)" with the "coloniality of knowledge and of being (gender, sexuality, subjectivity and knowledge)" as entangled characteristics of modern society that constantly reproduce "coloniality" (2007, 450-52). In his "Orders of Discourse", Michel Foucault has brought knowledge and power together as interlinked functions of society, arguing that the "will to truth [knowledge]" is a veiled "will to power" (Foucault 1971, 8; cf. Kögler 1994, 81, 84). Mignolo's conceptual move applies Foucault's ideas on knowledge and power to the colonial/neocolonial character of modernity and speaks of "subalternized knowledges" (2007, 451). In consequence, Cree scholar Margaret Kovach makes clear that prioritized Western-based research practices and policies reproduce colonial relationships in the academy and that the epistemological challenge is to achieve a "systemic shift in the ideology of knowledge production" (2009, 28).

Indigenizing the Academy (2004), as formulated by Devon Abbot Mihesuah and Angela Cavender Wilson with their book title, means transforming Western understandings of Indigenous knowledges on many different levels and creating academic and scientific spaces where Indigenous values and knowledges are respected and supported (Abbot Mihesuha/Cavender Wilson 2), where Indigenous methodologies and decolonizing perspectives are included, where multiple truths are accepted,

where epistemic differences are bridged (Kovach 2009, 27-29; Kuokkanen 2007, 143; Tuhiwai Smith 1999, 7), and where subjectivity and spiritual components have legitimate value beside objectivity and empirical evidence (cf. Grenier, 40; cf. Deloria, 40). While some scholars and scientists have regarded non-Western ideas and thought all along, this respect and acceptance of Indigenous and other non-Western epistemologies and employment of de-colonial strategies is increasingly practiced in Indigenous and Postcolonial Studies, but also in some branches of science and philosophy. While often Indigenous and postcolonial scholars act as pioneers recognizing pluriversality and employing decolonial methodologies, many collaborations of scholars from diverse epistemological backgrounds advance this practice (e.g. Barlow/Stone 2005; Kunuk/Mauro 2010).

Indigenous scholars mostly apply an inclusionist approach to indigenizing the academy, i.e. they acknowledge respectful work of non-Indigenous scholars, including Marxist, feminist, postcolonial, and other critical theories that help to expose and overcome Eurocentric hegemonies in societies, discourses, and university systems.[5] At the same time, Indigenous academics alert us that including Indigenous knowledges into Western-dominated academies risks transforming oral-based epistemes into print-based epistemes (Kovach, 12), validating Indigenous knowledges and methodologies solely according to Western standards (Grenier, 55), and subjecting the knowledge to Western control (Grenier, 13, 55). Moreover, they warn against potentially appropriating, tokenizing, and exploiting the knowledge as it is already happening in the pharmaceutical industry.[6] Indigenizing science and the academy must thus proceed along the principles of respect, recognition, reciprocity, and responsibility (Grenier, 42; Evans et al., 5; Kuokkanen, 144ff., 157). Integrated research approaches must be aware of neocolonial patterns in universities and consciously work against such patterns that are usually normatized assumptions hidden in the structures and operational procedures, be it power relations and hierarchies within the institutional system, contents of research, forms and presentation of research and results, theories and methodologies, forms of examinations, forms of speaking and (not) critiquing other people's work, or the (lack of) acknowledgement of cultural contexts. Such integrated research must thus not be extractive, and must be accountable to Indigenous standards, honoring Indigenous worldviews (Kovach 28-29). Moreover, the academy must go beyond the much-tried and token "giving of respect" and seriously engage with Indigenous epistemes (Kuokkanen 149). In this regard, it is essential to understand Indigenous knowledges and practices not as static, solely traditional, and directed at a precolonial past, but, as point-

5 Tuhiwai Smith 1999, 165-66,185-89; Kuokkanen 2007, 143; Kovach 2009, 47-48; Graham Smith in Kovach 2009, 88, 91-92.

6 Cultural Survival Canada states in 1995 that the "world market value of pharmaceuticals derived from plants used in traditional medicine had an estimated value of 43 billion United States dollars [USD] in 1985. Less than 0.001% of the profits have gone to the original holders of that knowledge" (qtd. in Grenier, 16). Cf. Tuhiwai Smith, 118-19.

ed out by Battiste, as dynamic, innovative, and changing according to neo/colonial influences, new technologies, and political developments (cf. Grenier, 6; Simon, 889). The term 'traditional knowledge' is also widely used; however, I propose that it is inappropriate and patronizing, because it locks Indigenous knowledge in the archaic and primordial and disallows Indigenous modernity. Instead, the term 'Indigenous knowledge' includes traditional *and* contemporary knowledges.

In general, indigenizing the academy does not mean privileging but equally including Indigenous epistemes, discourses, practices, and methodologies and interweaving Indigenous and Western knowledges, education, cultural beliefs, and values, with the aim to combine their respective competences (Tuhiwai Smith, 191). For example, Richard Atleo develops an Indigenous philosophical theory while integrating both Nuu-chah-nulth and Western philosophies (2004; 2011) and Jeannette Armstrong (2009) outlines *Enowkinwixw*, an Okanagan methodology for consensus-finding that might prove influential on Western political practices. Eduardo and Bonnie Duran craft an Indigenous psychological framework incorporating Jungian psychology and Indigenous cosmology (1995) and Jo-Ann Episkenew (2009) applies the psychological concept of post-traumatic stress disorder to Indigenous historical trauma. Gregory Cajete, in *Native Science*, explores Indigenous science paradigms according to Western categories of knowledge: Indigenous philosophy, psychology, ecology, herbology, holistic health, relationships to land and animals, and astronomy (2000). Robin Wall Kimmerer sees traditional ecological knowledge as feeding "Native science". She integrates her Indigenous understanding of nature and her Western training as a botanist to propose her ideas of "an emerging relationship between indigenous knowledge and Western science" and of acknowledging reciprocal relationships between humanity and the environment in order to arrive at a wider ecological consciousness (2013, 139, 179, 210). Examples of scholarly acknowledgement of traditional Indigenous forms of aqua and agriculture in Canada and Australia are Judith William's (2008) and Bruce Pascoe's (2014) books. Also non-Indigenous scholars contribute to this pluriversal epistemological discourse.[7] As mentioned earlier, David Peat merges his ideas on quantum physics and his understandings of Blackfoot knowledge (1994). As an example for the integration of Indigenous and non-Indigenous methodologies, *Enowkinwixw* is applied to contemporary non-Okanagan practices of consensus-finding and conflict resolution. It requires a fundamental rethinking of Western-dominated methodologies, a shift from individualistic being and doing to relational being and doing, and foremost, a focus on communal instead of individualistic benefits. Once this epistemological and ontological shift has begun to take root, the Indigenous method will prove beneficial, as it already guides decision-making processes at the Center for Ecoliteracy (CEL) in Berkeley (Barlow/Stone, 6, 7, 12).

7 Cf. Walter D. Mignolo's notion of 'pluriversality' (Mignolo, n.p.)

Such critical engagement with epistemic hierarchies and de-colonial integration of various non-Western and Western knowledge discourses is what Mignolo has described as "border thinking" or "border epistemology": "the biographical sensing of the Black body in the Third World, anchoring a politics of knowledge that is both ingrained in the body and in local histories. That is, thinking geo- and body-politically" (2011, 2). This border epistemology, then, needs to "delink from territorial and imperial epistemology grounded on theological (Renaissance) and egological (Enlightenment) politics of knowledge" (2) – "[a] delinking that leads to de-colonial epistemic shift and brings to the foreground other epistemologies, other principles of knowledge and understanding and, consequently other economy, other politics, other ethics" (2007, 453).

Another aspect of the discussion of Indigenous knowledges is the precarious state of most Indigenous languages around the globe. Our globalized capitalist-driven world experiences a loss of languages at a disheartening rate. Half of the roughly 6900 living languages that exist today will be lost at the end of this century, while most of the remaining ones will be endangered. This linguistic 'catastrophe' goes back to global European colonization and modern imperialism. Zahid Akter explains that "European colonization alone counts for the death of hundreds of Indigenous languages around the world" (2014, 310). English, in its role as "language of commodity, knowledge, technology, and communication", does not only displace "countless small Indigenous languages but marginalizes even big languages like Hindi, Bangla, Spanish etc" (311). Indigenous cultural, philosophical, and historical knowledge is tied to language that evolves from the land, as Jeannette Armstrong shows: "language arises as an expression of the 'land' and […] 'Indigeneity,' therefore generates literatures so deeply enmeshed in nature as to be the 'metasource' of the environmental ethic of a people" (2007, 31). Indigenous narratives and environmental ethics tied to land and forming Indigenous knowledge reside in the respective traditional languages. Much of this knowledge becomes decontextualized and at times misinterpreted through translation, or lost altogether with the language. There are many initiatives to preserve and teach Indigenous languages at community and institutional levels; many community-based initiatives integrate the teaching of environmental knowledges and local languages. In the same respect, Armstrong, in her dissertation "Constructing Indigeneity: Syilx Okanagan Oraliture and tmix^{w}centrism", employs Syilx terminology to expound Okanagan environmental understandings as contained in Okanagan oral traditional texts (2009); Zacharias Kunuk and Ian Mauro, in their documentary *Qapirangajuq: Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change*, interview many elders in five different Arctic regions about their environmental knowledge and observations due to global warming – the elders speak in Inuktitut (with English subtitles) in their homes, camps, or hunting grounds, thus transmitting Inuit knowledge in its cultural context. And yet, in both cases translation work is necessary and done for a wider understanding of the knowledge. Because of the loss of Indigenous languages one the hand and because

of the process of its integration in scholarship and science on the other, Indigenous knowledge will have to be translated into English or other European languages, a process that is highly critical and must be conducted with respect and care, and moreover with an expert understanding of the respective languages and knowledges.

This special edition consists of selected contributions to the conference "Indigenous knowledges and Academic Discourses" of 2014, one of the annual meetings of the Association for Canadian Studies in German-speaking countries (GKS) that was thematically organized by the GKS section "Indigenous and Cultural Studies". As Richard Atleo has pointed out in the foreword, the conference provided an open critical forum to investigate the various relationships between Indigenous knowledges and Western academic discourses. The conference sought to explore what kind of Indigenous knowledges exist in the Canadian Studies disciplines, how Western academia and research can benefit from these knowledges and knowledge practices, how they can be included in a respectful way, and how already appropriated knowledge can be acknowledged as Indigenous contribution. Reflecting the GKS's multidisciplinary character, the contributions come from various disciplines, such as history, cultural studies, literary studies, linguistics and Indigenous studies, that all cross disciplinary boundaries and engage in interdisciplinary scholarship. Moreover, the foreword and two articles were written by Indigenous scholars that offer great insight into Indigenous perspectives on epistemological power relations, knowledge practices, and new ways to integrate pluriversal knowledges and methods. They are complemented by six contributions by non-Indigenous authors, who, in order to arrive at de-colonial scholarship, approach their subjects with great respect, responsibility, and self-reflexivity, and who worked in close cooperation with Indigenous communities and scholars in projects, engaged intensively with diverse Indigenous knowledges, and/or based their own writing considerably on Indigenous scholarship.

Jeannette Armstrong explains how layers of Syilx Okanagan knowledge are contained in stories and oraliture that have been transmitted through generations. Using categories of oral literary vehicles that were developed as tools of analysis for Western oral traditions in her discussion of the Okanagan novel *Cogewea*, Armstrong actively combines Indigenous and non-Indigenous narrative concepts while producing what Mignolo would call de-colonial epistemology. She then looks at how her great-aunt Mourning Dove (Hum-ishu-ma) has used Syilx story characters and story grammar as conceptual plot devices in *Cogewea*. Drawing upon Latin American thinkers and other eminent theorists, John Carlson critically engages with the colonial epistemic violence of re-naming and reducing Indigenous knowledge concepts and traditional practices according to a Western understanding, in essence homogenizing the two distinct concepts 'Manoomin' and 'wild rice'. This imposing of Eurocentric knowledge patterns upon the other knowledge system de-legimitizes

and abrogates the Indigenous knowledge which then runs the risk of becoming discontinued in a society with an all-encompassing Eurocentric education system. He explains why 'Manoomin' is not 'wild rice', harvesting the plant being a system of governance, a "complex process involving political, economic and spiritual relations and responsibilities" with social functions that, in turn, among others enable people to have a relationship with Manoomin. He suggests *Anishinaabe-manoomin* as decolonial epistemic practice that critiques both Western imperial and Indigenous nationalist discourses as dogmatic affirmations of difference. At the same time, *Anishinaabe-manoomin* involves thinking from both perspectives, engendering "possibilities of dialogue and imagination beyond the pseudo-absolutist identities and social relations forged through the coloniality of power." In the following article, Hartmut Lutz suggests respectfully that Western scholars listen to Indigenous voices such as Armstrong's and Carlson's in order to better understand the historical epistemicide in public and academic discourses and to gain an understanding of Indigenous knowledges and their importance not only for Indigenous cultures but for the current production of knowledge around the globe. He studies the reasons why Indigenous ontology, epistemologies, and axiology were not accepted throughout the Western world, looking at naturalized premises of Christianity, the Enlightenment and the hierarchized divide between literacy and orality. He furthermore discusses what we neglected to learn from Indigenous social and knowledge practices – relationality, accountability and an identity embedded in the land – before pondering one key trope of Eurocentric philosophical thought, *Cogito ergo sum*, and offering an indigenized version.

Şükran Tipi, in French, explores the inextricable link between toponymy, linguistic and cultural knowledge, and Indigenous territories. The article outlines a current multidisciplinary research project of the Innu First Nation of Mashteuiatsh, located at Lake Saint-John (Quebec), that documents Indigenous knowledge, including place names, related to the ancestral territories of the Pekuakamiulnuatsh. Having participated in the project, Tipi illustrates the material and spiritual role places played and still play in the conserved and produced knowledge of the Innu in Northern Canada. Likewise, Indigenous knowledge is essential for the production of history discourses, for example in connection with the establishment of World Heritage Sites such as the Tr'ondëk-Klondike. With both archival and community oral history material on Chief Isaac's and other Hän leaders' efforts to create mutual dialogues, including dance performances, a potlatch, and participation in the Dawson pageants, David Neufeld, of Parks Canada, outlines an approach to history that includes the historical narratives of both the local Hän people and the non-Indigenous locals in order to create a respectful and meaningful commemoration of the region. Only if knowledge pluralism is achieved, he argues, prospective visitors of the Tr'ondëk-Klondike site can "understand the shared history and distinctive material culture written on the landscape of the Tr'ondëk-Klondike." Wolfgang Klooss, in German, delineates another pluralistic historical discourse in his meticu-

lous study of Métis historiography by non-Indigenous and Indigenous authors. Reflecting critically upon the work of non-Indigenous historiography and its unilateral narrative of Métis that has become accepted part of Canadian history for a long time, Klooss incorporates autobiographical fiction, commissioned work of Métis Associations, and newer works of Métis historians into his study. The latter have developed new research matrices that incorporate oral tradition accounts, church records, and communal history as well as Indigenous concepts such as *wahkootowin* (a holistic Cree concept that sees people in relation to all beings) as research paradigm and methodology. Klooss also observes a methodological shift from writing macro historical accounts with major events and historical figures to authoring micro historical narratives with small-scale community, family, or clan-oriented research focus; and likewise a departure from the individual specialist to research collectives with increasing women participation. In a similar vein, Jessica Janssen's article, in French, argues for the imperative inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in history discourses, here of Quebec. She embeds her argument in the context of decolonizing academic discourses as called for by scholars like Linda Tuhiwai Smith and Shawn Wilson. Mainly with the example of the Huron/Wendat historian George E. Sioui, she outlines characteristics and methods of Indigenous autohistory, which will contribute to a rewriting of the image and the role of Indigenous people in Canadian historiography and thus integrate Indigenous knowledge into academic discourses. Indigenous autobiographical writing, as special form of autohistory, challenges Western understandings and standards of autobiographical writing as well as the academic study of such works, as Katja Sarkowsky argues. Focussing on Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed* (1973) and Joy Harjo's *Crazy Brave* (2012), Sarkowsky studies narrative structures and strategies as well as how ideas of self, community, and autobiographical knowledge are reflected in the texts. They produce different forms of cultural knowledge, about the relationality of the self, community, and responsibility, with self-appointed "narrative agency." Through collective memory, or "postmemory," running through the texts, these works manifest a shift in life writing from an individualistic text to a text of a life – both text and life being embedded in and produced through the community. The article shows how Indigenous life writings "convey not only Indigenous life knowledge – knowledge about how a life is and can be led – but also Indigenous auto-bio-graphical knowledge – knowledge about how a life can be told." This is another example of how Indigenous knowledge production influences and complicates established academic practices and discourses and extends the notion of what counts as academic knowledge.

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Jeannette Armstrong

Influences of Okanagan Oraliture: Sources of Syilx Knowledge

Abstract

The focus of the essay is to draw on a section of my dissertation, "Constructing Indigeneity: Syilx Okanagan Oraliture and tmix^{w}centrism", to elaborate on the way that captik^{w}ɬ *as oraliture works in order to provide context to the way stories are Syilx Okanagan sources of knowledge. The essay expands on the way the* captik^{w}ɬ *utilizes various literary devices unique to oral story performance. Like any art form 'appreciation' includes not only the performance of the story but also the educated comprehension of the listeners to actively engage with the story and its depths of meaning. Various subjects of story are imparted in* captik^{w}ɬ *through categorizing them by providing story grammars which indicate that they are clearly informed by and revolve around Syilx ancestral knowledge intended to educate through realization, reflection and recall to retell in order to insure their continued transfer to succeeding generations. The essay expands on the unique oral literary vehicles used to carry meaning and coherence to reveal the layers contained as knowledge in story through examples. Significant terms borrowed from Rubin are used for such devices in common use in* captik^{w}ɬ *and can best be recognized as 'scripts,' 'associative networks,' 'analog' and 'loci.' The essay expands on the example of post contact influences of the* captik^{w}ɬ *as a source of Indigenous knowledge in the novel Cogewea by Okanagan writer Mourning Dove, who published a translated English collection of Okanagan stories (1976). The essay concludes with the continued influence* captik^{w}ɬ *has on me and the Syilx people.*

Résumé

Cet article se concentre sur une partie de ma thèse "Constructing Indigeneity: Syilx Okanagan Oraliture and tmix^{w}centrism", avec le but d'élaborer sur la manière dont captik^{w}ɬ *fonctionne comme littérature orale, ainsi que de fournir le contexte dans lequel les contes de la tradition orale constituent des sources de connaissances pour les Syilx Okanagan. L'article montre comment* captik^{w}ɬ *utilise des moyens littéraires divers qui sont uniques pour la narration orale de contes. Comme toute autre forme d'art, 'reconnaissance' inclut non seulement la représentation du conte mais aussi la compréhension intellectuelle des auditeurs/auditrices pour aborder activement le conte et la profondeur de sa signification. Les thèmes d'un conte sont véhiculés à travers* captik^{w}ɬ *en*

les catégorisant à l'aide de grammaires de conte divers, très clairement fondées sur et formées par les connaissances ancestrales des Syilx. De cette manière les contes contribuent à l'éducation par la connaissance, par la réflexion et par la mémoire active, assurant ainsi leur transfert continuel aux générations futures. Cet article met en lumière les uniques moyens dont se sert l'expression orale pour transmettre, à travers des exemples, la signification et la cohérence des diverses couches de connaissance contenues dans les contes. Des termes pertinents empruntés à David C. Rubin sont utilisés pour de telles modes d'expression en captikʷɬ *et peuvent le mieux être désignés comme 'scripts', 'réseaux associatifs (associative networks)', 'analogue (analog)' et 'lieux (loci)'. En outre, les influences sur* captikʷɬ *comme source de savoir autochtone après le contact colonial sont expliquées à travers l'exemple du roman Cogewea de l'écrivain Okanagan Mourning Dove qui a publié en 1976 une collection de contes Okanagan traduits en anglais. Cet article conclut sur l'influence continuelle et actuelle de* captikʷɬ *sur moi et sur le peuple des Syilx.*

Syilx Okanagan oral story, *captikʷɬ* (pronounced chapteekew) in the *nsyilxcn*[1] language of the Syilx Okanagan, is an essential documentation system by which Indigenous knowledge is maintained and transferred to succeeding generations, as I have outlined in my dissertation "Constructing Indigeneity: Syilx Okanagan Oraliture and tmixʷcentrism" (2009). It explained how *captikʷɬ* uses an oral literature method of environmental knowledge transfer, which forms the foundation of a unique form of environmental ethics that I termed '*tmixʷcentrism*'. In order to examine *captikʷɬ*, it was necessary to present the way that the *nsyilxcn* language, as an Indigenous language, replicates distinct and specific knowledge of the Syilx natural world in the way meaning is constructed and how *captikʷɬ* then delivers that knowledge. I presented research that showed that there needed to be a way to 'read' the layers of meanings in *captikʷɬ* in order to access the knowledge allowing analysis regarding the Syilx environmental ethic. As well, I examined obstacles preventing appreciation of the way the stories work to convey meaning through literature as a knowledge documenting system. The main obstacle is a result of the way that *captikʷɬ* works as a 'spoken' literature emanating out of an Indigenous language resident in one geographical location for at least 10,000 years. Another significant obstacle is a result of the way that *captikʷɬ* as a knowledge documenting system relies on a knowledge of *captikʷɬ* literary conventions to penetrate meaning. I preferred to create the term 'oraliture' to refer to *captikʷɬ*, in reference to its oral literary qualities, as being unique and different from written Western literary forms.

Here I will elaborate on the way that *captikʷɬ* as oraliture works in order to contextualize its influence on Syilx Okanagan sources of knowledge. I will expand on the way the *captikʷɬ* utilizes various literary devices unique to oral story performance. In that way, I will explore the relation between Indigenous knowledges contained in

1 The *nsyilxcn* language by convention does not use capital letters.

captikʷɬ and Western discourses. I have found David C. Rubin's *Memory in Oral Traditions and the Cognitive Psychology of Epic, Ballads and Counting Rhymes* (1995) to be useful in my research. Rubin's view, that meanings of words and larger units in an oral tradition cannot be understood solely in terms of the text in which they appear but in terms of the entire tradition to which that text belongs, is true of *captikʷɬ* (1-64). I rely, therefore, on the more defined terms he uses within the field of cognitive psychology to describe the devices significant to *captikʷɬ*. Rubin provides terms, which parallel those in *captikʷɬ*, for structural schema utilized as different mechanisms to shape meaning in oral transmission and to aid oral memory. As is the case with *captikʷɬ*, such schema, argues Rubin, occur in common use in the entirety of the literate works of a people (1995, 23-24). Just as in Western literary traditions, which separate such works, for example into prose or poetry, fiction or non-fiction and so on, the entirety of Syilx oraliture occurs within its own conventions, different from written literary conventions in significant ways as a result of oral literary requirements.

The primary role of *captikʷɬ*, as understood by the Syilx Okanagan, is that it is an enjoyable communal way for those hearing the *captikʷɬ* to appreciate the art of *storytelling*. Like any art form, 'appreciation' includes not only the performance of the story but also the educated comprehension of the listeners to actively engage with the story and its depths of meaning. Secondarily, the various subjects of story imparted in *captikʷɬ* are clearly informed by and revolve around Syilx ancestral knowledge intended to educate through realization, reflection and recall to retell in order to ensure their continued transfer to succeeding generations.

The general overarching schema of Syilx forms of story is that they can first be categorized into either *smaʔmayʔ*, which are anecdotal folk stories about historical human events, or *captikʷɬ*, as oraliture which are stories set in the animal world. *captikʷɬ* can be then somewhat organized into four general categories, although all categories overlap or weave into each other in different ways. As Okanagan language expert Anthony Mattina suggests, *captikʷɬ* occur through what other scholars identify as *a cycle* or *a complex* of stories in one culture. He further holds that typical of such complexes is that "episodes have neither a fixed order nor specific endings or beginnings" and similarly that a number of well-known *captikʷɬ* episodes are "cognate with various other Colville Okanagan narratives" (Mattina/DeSautel 2002, 22).

For the examination of oraliture (or *captikʷɬ*), the identification of general categories was to delineate the different social purposes of knowledge transmission. The way that the different *captikʷɬ* categories, as oraliture, perform their purpose, provides a foundational approach to their analysis for meaning. The four categories differ less in structure and device than in the intent for the receiver audience to whom knowledge is being transferred. The concept 'story grammar', as outlined by Rubin, suggests that there are forms of organization in oral traditions, including thematic organization, that operate to classify the story within the tradition through

its serial process (1995, 29-31). In this way, I theorize a story grammar for *captikʷɬ* as an analysis method to identify a larger overarching framework by which different story categories exist in the way different social strata are targeted. Each general category organizes story into those which offer social codes of conduct for a) the individual; b) family interaction; c) community relationships and; d) human interaction with the environment. This is one way *captikʷɬ* works in order to educate, rationalize and institutionalize the logic of the required ethics in human interactions. The societal ethics shaped through the four categories of *captikʷɬ* weave together to form a larger template of the wisdom for a society-wide appropriate ethic related to their inter-relationship with nature. A brief synopsis of the four general categorizations of *captikʷɬ* intent is provided here:

- Sacred text *captikʷɬ* – those in which correct ceremonial and ritual conventions are encoded. They are always serious in tone for select audience listeners and usually kept esoteric to Syilx knowledge keepers.
- World-before-humans *captikʷɬ* – those in which codes of conduct are connected to human ethics related to nature. They are lofty or serious in tone in which the story revolves around a philosophical dilemma or question which must be resolved.
- People-were-living *captikʷɬ* and people-were-traveling *captikʷɬ* – those which impart and encode social and community standards of conduct in the home, village or out on the land. They commonly make use of irony, suspense, pathos and other conflict enhancing devices.
- Coyote-traveling *captikʷɬ* – those which encode individual morals and behaviours in which Coyote encounters and eliminates people-eating-monsters to ready the world for the humans. They are much longer, intricate stories, requiring rich detailed embellishments and dramatic devices more suited to entertainment. Melodrama, humor, reversals and informality of subject are characteristic. They are most widely studied as trickster tales.

As a general rule, both world-before-humans *captikʷɬ* and sacred text *captikʷɬ* are selected to align with listening audiences on more formal political and ceremonial occasions. People-were-living *captikʷɬ* and people-were-traveling *captikʷɬ* and sometimes coyote-traveling *captikʷɬ* are generally selected for listening audiences to align with the local area on informal community social occasions. Family-centered occasions, either out on the land or in the home, are more open to selections of people-were-traveling *captikʷɬ* and coyote-trave*ling captikʷɬ* (Armstrong 2009, 114-125).

A deep influence on Syilx society of the knowledge through *captikʷɬ* is that they constitute a continuous feedback loop, in maintaining within a lived context knowledge for the essential ethics in Syilx society. *captikʷɬ* are continuously accessible to all, without censor, from an early age on into all levels of maturity, allowing

their meaning to deepen and evolve with the experience of each individual. *captikʷɬ* become omnipresent in a way that permeates the social psyche and provides a lifeway to be lived in the present. The continued social telling of *captikʷɬ* ensures each succeeding generation has access to the knowledge of the social codes for conduct and therefore acquires the values consistent with the Syilx land ethic. The Syilx construct of nature's wisdom transmitted through story provides references which can be interpreted into relations within community and family circles. *captikʷɬ* are delivered by people who are relatives or community members gifted with storyteller memory, and are thus imbued with an affection and respect for the characters linked to the tellers. The *captikʷɬ* stories are part of our communities, part of our families and permeate the everyday world as an ever-present lens through which all interactions can be seen. In that way, it is the intimacy and the psychology of knowing who is telling the story that acts as intermediary between the teller and the learner and provides a critical component of how the story is received; they are critical in the development of ethics and values in each new generation that the stories are told. Moreover, the tellers are spiritual interfaces between humans and nature's beings, in that their stories carry the spark to illuminate the vast knowledge of nature held within our communities and families as a part of the place they have occupied for many thousands of years. In that way, the *captikʷɬ* speak a metalanguage continuously casting our interactions in the light of being part of a cohesive whole with each other as humans, as well as humans within that larger lifeworld of living nature. The *captikʷɬ* continuously embed the ethic that it is nature which accords us our physical lives and therefore is essential as the foundation of knowledge of how we are to conduct ourselves in relation to each other.

The *captikʷɬ* are structured for 'telling' in that the structure and the devices are germane to live performed story. Much like epic poetry, the listener must be able to sustain coherence through the variety of layered meanings contained in the story. *captikʷɬ* employ structural devices unique to oral story performance, to assist the storyline and develop a rich layering of imagery and description that conveys meaning with the least amount of explication. This provides a memory track for the teller and the listener. In addition to the story's surface plot, clarity and coherence is provided for the listener through the story's ability to relate aspects taken directly from nature to the story in order to impart and encode the intended knowledge.

All interactions of nature's beings are common knowledge to the Syilx and are familiar and specific to the ecology of the Syilx land. They can be relied on to provide a ready template from which to draw the necessary story meaning. The typical interplay between the different species in nature are encountered by all Syilx people, even in the contemporary world, and serve as stable referents by which to convey meaning when cast as parallels to human interactions. Different types of interaction assist to develop tensions, provide sub-text and to help deliver models of archetypical characterization and metaphor. As literary tools they become elegant vehicles to carry meaning and coherence and at the same time to reveal the layers

contained as knowledge in story. Such devices, borrowed from Rubin, in common use in *captikʷɬ* can best be recognized as "scripts," "associative networks," "analog" and "loci" (Rubin 1995, 23-24).

Scripts include whole sets of social behavior or interactions familiar in the human everyday world. Scripts need no explanation when abstracted into one word or a phrase. A common example of proper social behavior in Syilx Okanagan culture is the expectation to feed guests first, though they be strangers, before visiting with them. The script solicited in the phrase 'setting food,' in the language, implies and includes all of the images of the entire sequence of an invitation to a seating order: service of a hot beverage, followed by berries or fruit, a light meat or fish dish, then the offer of a preserved food gift for the guest to take when they leave. All this takes place before conversation – other than polite travel inquiry. Another example of a single word which is common to the Syilx Okanagan is the word 'digging,' which in *nsyilxcn* conjures up all the images involved in the traditional practice of a family or other group that has prepared food, tools and travel plans to go out camping on the land for the ritual harvest of a traditional root crop, including the work of cleaning and preparing it for preservation. In that way scripts are a way to impart specific meaning in a minimum of words without long, wordy descriptions, leaving the listeners' individual imaginations to conjure images and concepts through the lens of their own experiences. In that way *captikʷɬ* scripts impart the sense of a personalized participation and inclusion in the story. Scripts in *captikʷɬ* also rely heavily on common interactions, which would be unquestionably familiar to all Syilx, between nature's beings, since observance of them is commonplace, creating again the sense of a personalized story landscape. As an example, a story involving the blackbird might simply refer to it and mimic its sounds and movements in order to impart the idea of the blackbird's actions when harassing the much larger hawk dodging around in mid-air to avoid its assaults, after the hawk has ventured too near its nest. The blackbird's sounds and movements work to detail the story, and thereby, on another level, to underline that particular kind of human interaction. The sounds, colors, time of year of the storytelling as personal connection to the experience of place brings richness to the imagery being solicited in the mind of the listener to deliver a key point.

Associative networks in *captikʷɬ*, on the other hand, make use of an association within a network of human and nature associations as directive knowledge in the creation of inference. As an example, Raven is a familiar figure in *captikʷɬ*. The use of this character suggests Raven's association to every other being and thing within the whole system as a characteristic 'raven-ness.' Raven is an opportunist in nature, so having a raven interact with other characters in the story both creates an implied association for the listener to the nature of expected interactions, as well as to identify the topic or theme carried by the story. Both encode and impart meaning and depth significant to the story based on the knowledge of what constitutes raven-ness. In that way, all commonplace birds, animals, insects, fish and even plants are

utilized to form associative network knowledge sets in *captikʷɬ*, significant to the social codes being imparted. Each animistic story character must then be read within a wider network of associations, both human and nature. Fully penetrating *captikʷɬ* requires interpretation by a Syilx person knowledgeable about the type of associations that the animistic characters have within the vast ecological network of the Syilx Okanagan landscape.

The use of an analog assists in creating other layers of meaning to carry encoded and intended information as sub-text. An example can be seen in the use of analog in several stories. In one story Coyote props his eyes open to stay awake to be early to get the best name, while in another he juggles his eyes to impress and spy on others. The eyes, analogous to seeing the truth, are used in those stories to highlight human morals in trying to attain something or triumph through deceitful means. Of course, shortsightedness in those stories leads to failure and a lesson to be learned. The same analog appears in other stories with different animals. In one it is to highlight dangerous naiveté in the face of evil, such as in the episode in the *captikʷɬ* of Owl Monster, whose big eyes watch Chipmunk for an opportunity to pounce on her. Owl Monster hides her eyes, when Chipmunk asks her to, all the while peeking through the feathers of the wing covering her piercing eyes as Chipmunk climbs down from the berry-bush. In another, Mole, who is blind in the light of day, never sees how Coyote really is and so believes he is smart and handsome. Such analogs utilizing different objects and body parts are common and occur over many *captikʷɬ*.

The use of loci, or mind mapping in story, allows the teller a memory path from one point to another. Loci in *captikʷɬ* utilize direct reference to places in a story which are distinct and well-known within the Okanagan landscape. As unique landforms loci provide an easy story path to direct, follow, locate and identify the significant meanings layered within a storyline, and assist the memory progression of both the teller and the audience. Loci within story also provide useful geographical mapping of significant parts of the territory as well as bring the landscape alive with the presence of the *captikʷɬ* characters and their ethics. In that way the land itself becomes infused with teaching and deep meaning and becomes spiritually precious. As an example in the story of Coyote bringing salmon to the people, the story loci is a real path, which defines and connects the territory through its river systems leading from village to village. Each village, complete with special geographical landforms, is referenced within the story as part of Coyote's magic, to both impart intended situations in the story in relation to the laws of kinship systems and salmon governance protocols, and at the same time to provide a clear mind map to be accessed by travelers.

captikʷɬ as story is also made more complex by nature knowledge in another way through the use of a device that I term the 'animafication' of humans, through the creation of characters to display observable and familiar characteristics lifted directly from the Syilx knowledge of the natural world. Animal behavior is stable and

dependable for all to use as ready reference to codify aspects of human behaviors. 'Animafication' is a necessary device to avoid confusion of theme and topic and provides immediate imagery for the recognition of behaviors by which to dramatize human capacity, creativity and potential. As well it is necessary to point out negative latent tendencies which individuals in society are capable of and will encounter that are a detriment to society. The world-before-humans *captikʷɬ* are characterized by featuring specifically selected *tmixʷ* as people. *tmixʷ* is the general *nsyilxcn* word used to refer to all lifeforms of animal, bird, plant, fish, insect or reptile. In the *captikʷɬ*, *tmixʷ* are never actual animals, but animanized people. At the same time they are not humans, but are humanized in a world peopled only by *tmixʷ*. In the preface to *Tales of the Okanagan,* Mourning Dove, who grew up immersed in *captikʷɬ*, described *captikʷɬ* as stories from the animal world that were a part of education where story characters are "somewhat in the form of humans who could transform into animal form at will" (Mourning Dove 1976, 13). It is characteristic for storytellers to acknowledge that they are *captikʷɬ tmixʷ* and not the individual specific animal, bird, fish or insects we see out on the land, as there are no portrayals of actual birds, animals, fish or insects, since *captikʷɬ* are understood to be set in the time of *captikʷɬ tmixʷ*.

Deconstructing the *nsyilxcn* terminology used to describe the time the stories refer to is extremely critical to developing a *captikʷɬ* theoretical framework for contextualizing the story world. Examinations of the stories prefaced by the category designating them as world-before-humans *captikʷɬ* reveal that these *tmixʷ* are not magical or mystical deities, but are constructed in human thought to humanize the knowledge of the non-human lifeworld. Rather than the familiar personification of animals, that is, giving an animal a human persona for the purpose of story, humans are instead endowed with animal personas. Some of the most important and familiar personas encountered are: Coyote, Porcupine, Bear, Raven, Meadowlark, Magpie, Chickadee, Eagle, Salmon, Frog, Turtle, Tamarack Tree, Saskatoon Berry, Camus Root, Fly, Maggot and Cricket.

Characters are selected from nature, not for what they look like but for what they do in nature, which can be transposed unto human interactions. Their actions are magnified and exaggerated to illuminate what is possible in human interaction, both good and bad. Several of the key personas could be described as being archetypical in their significant and unchanging roles throughout all *captikʷɬ*. As a result, animal interactions impart two layers of knowledge. One layer is that nature itself is mirrored in story to be contextualized as humanized interactions, which allows ecological knowledge to be available and familiar within and part of the human social consciousness domain. Nature knowledge becomes internal to us as a part of our living experience and is perceived in human interactions. Another layer is the use of what I term 'ecomimicry' as an essential component in embedding the characteristics of nature as an older and wiser order and intelligence continuously informing us, teaching and guiding us in the way a natural system's parts interact as a

template for human values and ethics. The result is abstract knowledge based on the *tmixʷ* interactions, which have verifiable outcomes and so impart systems-based principles and concepts in human behavior and conduct while at the same time delivering the knowledge of nature's dynamics in the real and physical ecology surrounding us. For example many stories contain interactions between characters in very specific times of the year in specific habitats, providing clear ecological information for human harvesting protocols for conserving and respecting vulnerabilities. In some stories, the relationship between two characters provides knowledge about symbiotic or ecological niche co-inhabitants that require special considerations in order to preserve the whole.

In that way, *captikʷɬ* characters permeate the Syilx consciousness as metaphysical animanized voices who speak through *captikʷɬ* in human language and in human contexts. In so doing, they are experienced by us as the mystical story beings to be revered as spiritual beings that are ever present, both in the seen world and the unseen world of human knowledge. The *tmixʷ* surround us constantly, as our teachers in the real world to be seen and observed in their physical knowable forms. In that way *captikʷɬ* knowledge is based on the physical knowledge of Nature's beings; their interrelationships are known in turn as intimately as the human lifeworld. *captikʷɬ* deeply influence how the Syilx knowledge of environment is continuously accessed and taught, as well as how that Syilx knowledge informs human conduct toward each other and toward Nature's lifeforms.

For Syilx society, and indeed for its writers who are familiar with *captikʷɬ*, it is clear that *captikʷɬ* influences their perspective in regard to contemporary conflicts in the internal landscape of the human as individual as well as within their society in relation to their environment. The stories continue to deeply influence how such knowledge is imparted at all levels and guides the effects it has on community, the individual, and therefore the land and its protection.[2]

My focus here is the novel *Cogewea* (1981), in which Okanagan storyteller Mourning Dove maintains the formal intent of *captikʷɬ* within the framework of a frontier romance fiction. Alanna Kathleen Brown, who has researched and written extensively on Mourning Dove, describes the novel as a work that reflects the sense of Mourning Dove's oral tradition and innate storytelling skills. She further suggests that Mourning Dove wrote to create space for Okanagan consciousness in that time of a suffocating dominant cultural obtuseness (Brown 1993, 51-58). Mourning Dove's perspective, and orientation toward a Syilx audience, is as clear in the novel as it is in her 1976 published collection of Okanagan stories. In Mourning Dove's response to her editor McWhorter in 1930, she explains that in recasting her stories for him she has omitted many things, but that "an Indian that knows the story can read between the lines just the same" (Mourning Dove *Letters to*, n.d.). Similarly, in

2 My dissertation "Constructing Indigeneity: Syilx Okanagan Oraliture and tmixʷcentrism" provides several other examples of contemporary writing which utilize *captikʷɬ* conventions.

1976, Donald Hines published a retrieved original manuscript of the 38 Okanagan stories provided by Mourning Dove in which her comments in the preface reveal her clarity about the purpose of her writing. In this preface, Mourning Dove explained that her primary interest was to write novels to show the Okanagan viewpoint, and that she had been reluctant to collect and write the Okanagan stories in English (Mourning Dove 1976, 14). However, she revealed that she was clearly influenced by the knowledge carried in *captikʷɬ*. Also that she had found a rich field of story untouched by non-Okanagans she was now translating, because before that non-Okanagans could not understand what an Okanagan would see in the stories. She clearly viewed the stories as being of great importance to the younger generations in the conviction that her reward would be knowing that she has preserved for their future the folklore of her ancestors (1976, 12-14).

In brief, the novel *Cogewea* disguises and frames the fictional romance of the protagonist Cogewea within the template of a common and well-known *captikʷ*. It is clearly the story of *qʷəqʷcẃiyaʔ*-chipmunk and *sninaʔ*-owl monster, referred to above in the use of eyes as an overarching analog of seeing through to the truth, which envelops the story theme. The novel's storyline is centered on Cogewea, a half-breed Indian girl, and two men competing over her attentions, a greedy English Easterner and a respectful half-breed cowboy. The novel's title *Cogewea*, Mourning Dove's anglicized version of the word *qʷəqʷcẃiyaʔ*-chipmunk, sets out the associative networking of the story, not only in terms of the dangerous naiveté of Cogewea, but also the new generation of Okanagans who she represents and whose culture is now half non-Okanagan. The *captikʷɬ* of "Chipmunk and Owl Woman" (Mourning Dove 1933, 41-59) was one of the feature stories Mourning Dove translated in a tamed-down version for her collection, and is a story known by virtually all Syilx people mainly as Chipmunk and Owl Monster, even in contemporary times.

Dexter Fisher, in her introductory comments to the reprinted novel, observes that the novel is inspired by the Okanagan story of "Chipmunk and Owl Woman" (1981, v-xxix). From a Syilx perspective, the formal structural devices and intent inherent in *captikʷɬ*, as discussed in the core premise of this paper, are clearly the anchoring foundation to Mourning Dove's approacḥ, rather than inspired by them. As an Okanagan storyteller, Mourning Dove would have purposely selected the correct *tmixʷ* character of Chipmunk who appears in other Okanagan *captikʷɬ*, because of her masterful knowledge of Okanagan oral story associative networks and the story analog of the eyes of the Owl Monster. She employs the *captikʷɬ* method to reflect on and thereby speak to her own contemporary societal conflict issues through a *captikʷɬ* lens, in order to warn succeeding generations not to be fooled and captivated by the colonizing culture's professed intentions, but to see its real motives in regard to Indigenous lands. The novel speaks Mourning Dove's view of early settler colonialism in true Syilx *captikʷɬ* method, revealing the tension confronting the new generation of Syilx Okanagan in cultural transition and the knowledge of the dangerous choices before them.

Mourning Dove uses *captikʷɬ* as a framework to speak to the Syilx Okanagan about the dynamics of the frontier mentality. When analyzed from a Syilx oral story perspective, using an associative-network lens, what becomes visible is that Mourning Dove selects the script of the parentless orphan *captikʷɬ* Chipmunk, with only grandmother to care for her, to embody the character of Cogewea who, in the novel, also has only her grandmother to guide her. Old Grandparent, in Syilx culture, is an analog representing the guiding nature and knowledge of the past. The use of the parentless child, a well-known script of an innocent young person who needs security, care and guidance, provides a way for Mourning Dove to portray the real circumstance faced by the tiny population of Okanagan, the last survivors of a smallpox epidemic.[3] Mourning Dove referred to them in her autobiography, published in 1994, as living in "a pathetic state of turmoil" (Miller 1994, 3). She highlights this image in the novel when she writes that upon the Easterner's arrival, "he had expected to see the painted and blanketed aborigine of history and romance; but instead he had only encountered this miniature group of half-bloods and one ancient squaw" (1981, 43-44).

Mourning Dove would have been aware of the role of Chipmunk as the tragically innocent orphaned child forced to go out alone to pick berries, with only her old and helpless grandmother's warnings to protect her. In this script, we know that Chipmunk is prey for a monster who eats little girl's hearts. The intent of the script in the story grammar of There-Were-People-Living *captikʷɬ* is to identify and characterize a malevolence that is a threat to the people. In the *captikʷɬ*, Chipmunk escapes at first but is betrayed, in return for a payment, so she still loses her heart. The grandmother is helpless and cannot protect her from the monster, who finds her and rips out her heart. Chipmunk is restored to life and to her grandmother, however, through spirit power, which replaces her missing heart with a Saskatoon berry. Saskatoon Berry, a *captikʷɬ* story chief, appears in one of the most significant stories related to the Syilx land ethic, and is both food and seed. It is a well-known analog representing coming new generations. The script of being revived to life by something from the land is found in many other *captikʷɬ*. The inferred use of Saskatoon Berry analog is present in the healing of Cogewea's broken heart. In fact, Mourning Dove ends the chapter titled "The Cost of Knowing" with the line "To Cogewea, the world was dead" (1981, 279). Together with the analog of returning to the healing care of old grandmother representing land knowledge, the novel speaks eloquently about the necessary change which must be achieved through the security of the Syilx land ethics in their traditions. It is clearly not an accidental choice in the novel's resolve and its underlying meaning.

3 The waves of smallpox in the Pacific Northwest in 1782, in 1835 and in 1852-53, among other diseases, were responsible for reducing the Indigenous population in the interior of the Pacific Northwest by two thirds (Burns 1966, 13).

Mourning Dove is very much aware of the underlying associative connection that she establishes through Chipmunk and Owl Monster. Cast in the character of the Easterner is the devious monster character that portrays the colonizing culture capable of consuming the Okanagan people and their lands. We get a sense of this deeper tension as a sub-text of the choices confronting the Okanagan between the world of the Syilx and the world of the non-Syilx, through the story of the half-blood Cogewea, representing her people's cultural transformation. Cogewea is a "half-blood" caught between the grandmother's world and the world of the Easterner by "being lured to a shadowy trail of sorrow by the deceiving Shoyapee" (1981, 244). Just as Cogewea's trusting heart is ripped open by the thieving treachery of the Easterner, Mourning Dove makes clear that the monster that rips the heart out of the remnants of the vulnerable Okanagan people after smallpox is the "soulless creatures who have ever preyed upon us" (1981, 283). What also becomes clear in the meaning of Chipmunk's return to life by spirit power is Mourning Dove's resolve in the return of Cogewea and her half-breed lover to live in the ways of grandmother, as half-bloods in the "corral erected round us" (1981, 283). This may refer to being corralled both culturally and physically, in the establishment of reservations. Either way, Mourning Dove provides clarity that although the transformation to living half-and-half of each culture cannot be avoided, because the Shoyapee culture surrounds their everyday lives, the best choice is to remain insulated within the teachings of their ancestors.

Mourning Dove wrote as one deeply influenced by knowledge in the *captikʷɬ* in the way she utilized and relied on *captikʷɬ* to convey her main teachings regarding the dangerous times and lack of morals and ethics of the newcomers regarding the land and its people. The work she undertook in collecting, translating and publishing the *captikʷɬ* has indeed continued to influence each new generation of Syilx in the form of their continual telling in English in the education of our children and adults. Her novel is studied and read by Syilx people who penetrate and appreciate its layers of meaning as *captikʷɬ*; it continues to be told and studied both in *nsyilxcn* and in English in the Syilx communities. The contemporary interest in Indigenous knowledge as a source of remedy for the societal and environmental problems being experienced as result of the lack of an appropriate land ethic has increased a wider Syilx community interest in our *nsyilxcn* language and the *captikʷɬ* as a source to be relied on.

Mourning Dove's intent to use *captikʷɬ* to warn future generations against the loss of Syilx values and ethics was clear to me as a *captikʷ* teller when I read the novel for the first time. As a Syilx person who is a fluent speaker of the Okanagan *nsyilxcn* language and a storyteller in the *captikʷɬ* tradition, I am constantly reminded by *captikʷɬ* that the animal world's creatures are our benevolent relatives who feast us within their covenant to feed each other so all could live in health. The animal people of the stories are our spiritual teachers, teaching reciprocity and restraint, respect and responsibility; they are the guardians of a knowledgeable, peaceful and

spiritual human society now and into the future through *captikʷɬ*. I have chosen to utilize the insight and knowledge within *captikʷɬ* regarding the living land and our relationship to it in order to focus my view on societal values and environmental ethics that require transformation, following the intent of *captikʷɬ*. In that way, the interfaces between Indigenous knowledges and Western discourses may be enhanced through an effort to 'read' through the stories and penetrate their meaning, thus learning from *captikʷɬ* and understanding how human knowledge and behavioral protocol toward the land is contained in such narratives and stories. Perhaps wider society, in learning to 'read' such stories for such knowledge, can begin the necessary changes in its behavior towards the environment. Perhaps western literatures may be influenced toward new conventions focused on literatures creating reciprocal and spiritual relationship with the living beings surrounding them.

My own land ethic and societal values emanating from the knowledge in *captikʷɬ* have influenced everything I have written, and everything I have done in my life's work to maintain and make available, through education, the *captikʷɬ* to as many of the new generations as possible.

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John Carlson

Manoomin is not Wild Rice: An Anishinaabeg Treaty

Abstract

In this article I consider the Anishinaabeg tradition of harvesting manoomin as it is conceived within the language used by Anishinaabeg political actors. I attempt to show that manoomin is not identical to wild rice and that these distinct concepts and their concomitant epistemic and ontological projects are obscured in the act of using these terms interchangeably. I emphasize that these words signify different projects and I introduce a third, which I call Anishinaabe-manoomin following many local designations, as a means of contributing to a decolonial articulation of these projects by highlighting the humanist dimension of the term Anishinaabe.

Résumé

À travers cet article, j'examine la tradition Anishinaabeg de récolter manoomin tel qu'elle est véhiculé par le langage des acteurs politiques Anishinaabeg. Je cherche à montrer que manoomin et le riz sauvage ne sont pas identiques et que le fait d'utiliser ces termes de manière indifférenciée obscurcit la différence entre leurs conceptions et leurs projets épistémiques et ontologiques concomitantes. J'accentue sur le fait que ces termes représentent des projets divers et introduis un troisième que j'appelle Anishinaabeg – manoomin en faisant référence à de nombreuses dénominations locales, dans le but de contribuer à une articulation décolonisée de ces projets, tout en insistant sur la dimension humaniste du terme Anishinaabeg.

Introduction

Translation appears as a means by which communication across cultures is facilitated. However, the linguistic direction in which this act flows is not neutral. Despite this, the languages in which dominant epistemologies are codified appear as neutral media the more hegemonic they become extending their form to whatever object falls within their purview. But the question of this hegemony is based on a great epistemic violence that, in part, perpetuates itself every time we assume the neutrality of translation. In this article I consider the Anishinaabeg tradition of har-

vesting manoomin[1] as it is conceived within the language used by Anishinaabeg political actors. I attempt to show that manoomin is not identical to wild rice and that these distinct concepts and their concomitant epistemic and ontological commitments are obscured in the act of using these terms interchangeably. I therefore suggest that these words signify different projects and I introduce a third, which I call Anishinaabe-manoomin following many local designations, as a means of contributing to a decolonial articulation of these projects by highlighting the humanist dimension of the term Anishinaabe. To this end, I elaborate my argument by drawing on concepts developed by various Latin American thinkers, specifically those affiliated with the Modernity/Coloniality/Decoloniality Group (MCD).[2] My appeal to Latin American thinkers is based on a twofold rationale. On the one hand, their analyses examine the consequences of the so-called discovery of the New World, which extend well beyond the borders of modern nation-states whether South or North American; on the other hand, and primarily because of this transnational historical reading, their theories take into consideration certain generative processes of modernity intimately linked to colonialism, which equally mark the Canadian context as they do the southern part of the hemisphere. Their contributions therefore help identify certain aspects of colonial relations that do not find a thorough articulation under the theoretical lens of settler colonialism, which strikes me as the predominant discourse in Canada at the moment, particularly with regards to the epistemological violence of colonialism. Furthermore, the historical narrative that forms the basis of the MCD project foregrounds a more complex logic of domination, the extent of which remains underdeveloped through an analysis of Indigenous-settler relations that postulates the nation-state as a point of departure. In thinking with these ideas, I hope to draw attention to the epistemological problems engendered by colonialism and think through the challenges of a politics based on a project of epistemic diversity. Moreover, I am driven by the hope and possibility of revitalizing the practice of harvesting manoomin within my own community. The reflections presented here are thus part of an effort to give greater meaning to this motive by arguing for the epistemic and political sense of such a project in our contemporary circumstances, especially pertaining to cases where it is a question of restoring certain traditions that have been negated and identifying the conditions that enable these traditions to be shared across colonially constructed identities and borders.

1 Manoomin is commonly referred to as wild rice in English. For a brief but insightful introduction to this tradition see the short video by Ryan Finn *Manoomin: Food that Grows on the Water*, narrated by Fred Ackley Jr. of Mole Lake Reservation, Wisconsin available at http://theways.org/story/manoomin.

2 For a good overview of the MCD group see Mabel Maraña, Enrique Dussel, and Carlos A. Jáuregui (2008).

'Anishinaabe' as humanist[3] tradition

The meaning of Anishinaabe[4] has been interpreted in a variety of ways. Whether understood as "the good beings," "the spontaneous beings," or "from whence lowered the male of the species," all have denoted some notion of the human being (Child, xvii). Today, it is well known that the word in Anishinaabemowin (the language of the Anishinaabe) often refers to "indigenous peoples," not exclusively those who self-identify as Anishinaabe or Algonquin, for instance, but all Indigenous peoples across what is now the Americas. What is not often emphasized is that prior to contact all peoples were signified by the term, not in the sense of cultural homogeneity, but as a means of recognizing the humanity of others. Anishinaabeg spiritual teacher Edward Benton-Benai reminds us of this in his narration of the Creation story, whereby all Indigenous peoples originate from Original Man.[5] It is only with the advent of colonialism and the establishment of settler populations that Anishinaabe came to refer exclusively to Indigenous peoples and more commonly to Anishinaabe as a specific cultural group. What seems crucial today is precisely the need to recover the underlying tradition of this name as a concept and practice of philosophical reflection on humanity;[6] that is, a reflection on what it means to be human as opposed to the mere affirmation and exclusive use of Anishinaabe as a designation for a category of people born within a context of colonial relations and knowledge practice.

This is how I understand Nishnaabekwe scholar Leanne Simpson when she states with reference to Mohawk scholar Taiaiake Alfred:

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3 I am using this term in the sense used by Nelson Maldonado-Torres in his discussion of Frantz Fanon where he argues that Fanon's brand of humanism is not "the abstract humanism that interferes with the activity of humanization," but a suspension of this false universal for the purpose of striving for a higher expression of the human that transcends colonial and racist social systems (Maldonado-Torres, 158). This is corroborated by Lewis Gordon's observation that "[f]or people whose humanity has long been denied, the value of philosophical anthropology became their *philosophia prima*" (2016, 69). I will speak more about this below.

4 The meaning of Anishinaabe has great personal import for me and has inspired some of the reflections in this paper. My Anishinaabeg names, given to me by my Elders at Opwaaganisining (Lake Helen, Ontario), are Gaa gabaa wiij'iwaad Anishinaaben and Gaa gabaa wiij'iwaad kina wiya, which translate respectively as "one who helps the people" and "one who helps all living beings." Attempting to live these two names responsibly has led me to think about the greater meaning of Anishinaabe beyond colonial determinations.

5 "All tribes came from this Original Man. The Ojibway [Anishinaabe] are a tribe because of the way they speak. We believe that we are nee-kon'-nis-ug' (brothers) with all tribes; we are separated only by our tongue or languages" (Benton-Banai, 4).

6 I will discuss this in more detail below in relation to the Anishinaabeg Seven Fires Prophecy.

> [We] need to reclaim the "radical" and "revolutionary" parts of Nishnaabeg[7] Knowledge, the parts that encourage what Alfred calls "free philosophical thinking," and encourage self-reflection […] I believe that the fundamentalism that is sometimes seen in Nishnaabeg and other Indigenous communities is a facet of colonialism, and comes from a misunderstanding of Nishnaabemwin and Nishnaabeg philosophy. (2008, 212)

It is no accident that Simpson refers here to the risk of fundamentalism in conjunction with the project of reclaiming and empowering Indigenous epistemic traditions, and her intuition about its colonial origin is not trivial, but critical. The source of this misunderstanding is intrinsically connected to and arises primarily from the notion and function of colonialism one assumes to be at work in society. Puerto Rican sociologist Ramón Grosfoguel provides an insightful distinction that sheds light on the nature of this problem:

> It is important here to distinguish the "epistemic location" from the "social location." The fact that one is socially located on the oppressed side of power relations does not automatically mean that he/she is epistemically thinking from a subaltern epistemic location. The success of the modern/colonial world-system consists precisely in making subjects that are socially located on the oppressed side of the colonial difference think epistemically like ones in dominant positions. (Grosfoguel 2011, 5)

In other words, the fact of being oppressed does not imply an epistemic position autonomous from the system of domination nor one that is by definition different from the epistemology that reproduces it. To assume so is to postulate an absolute exteriority, understood in ontological terms, and neglect the epistemological dimension of colonial domination. Moreover, due to this neglect of relationality, an understanding based on the conflation of social location and subaltern epistemic practice risks being self-characterized as the negation of its opposite (the epistemology and norms of the colonizer) within the binary of colonial relations, without challenging the very logic that produces and justifies epistemic hierarchy. As such, it presupposes a dehistoricized and monotopic epistemology that merely extends a dogmatic privilege to the location of the subaltern understood as the absolute Other of the system. This gives rise to a position, consequently, which is highly conducive to fundamentalism. Here the relevance of Simpson's discussion, following the teachings of Anishinaabeg Elder Gdigaa Migizi, of the Anishinaabeg notion of Aanjigone is paramount. Simpson defines it as

7 Nishnaabeg is another spelling of Anishinaabe according to particular dialects of Anishinaabemowin spoken by Anishinaabe peoples in different geographical regions.

> the idea that one needs to be very, very careful with making judgments and with the act of criticism. Aanjigone is a concept that promotes the framing of Nishnaabeg values and ethics *in the positive*. It means that if we criticize something our spiritual being may take on the very things we are criticizing. (2011, 54; emphasis J.C.)

While Simpson suggests that Aanjigone is an attitude grounded in the spiritual knowledge of the "implicate order," in the context of the current discussion, I interpret this as the cautionary attitude that resists proceeding without reflection on the logic of the terms born within colonial relations, an act which signals the danger of reinforcing a dogmatism grounded in the oppressed as a privileged form of subjectivity without heeding the distinction introduced by Grosfoguel. As such, Aanjigone marks a general attitude and epistemic resource for the framework of my argument and the project of decolonization I propose here. It gives expression to an indispensable step in confronting the epistemological problem of philosophical mobility.[8] However, this argument requires further elucidation of its sources, especially if one is to resist the collapse of a humanist interpretation of Anishinaabe into this logic. Although I can only provide a general summary, which certainly does not capture the complexity of the MCD project, I hope to at least highlight some key concepts that are important for my argument.

MCD Project: Some Concepts

Grosfoguel's distinction belongs to a genealogy of thought based on a specific reading of history, one developed by a number of Latin American thinkers,[9] including Argentine semiotician Walter Mignolo who defines the concept of the "modern/colonial world-system" referred to above as

> an epistemic standpoint or locus of enunciation that emerged and evolved in Latin American scholarship and during the Cold War period that looked at modernity from the perspective of coloniality, that is, from the perspective of the Creolo/mestizo/European immigrant consciousness whose history unfolded at the receiving end of the colonial experience […] It is, first and foremost, an epistemic standpoint on world history whose key concept is the "coloniality of power". (Mignolo 2003, 436-437)

8 See John Borrows (2016) for a discussion of Indigenous physical and intellectual mobility as primary challenges to decolonization and the good life.

9 For a thorough look at this genealogy see Mabel Maraña, Enrique Dussel, and Carlos A. Jáuregui (2008).

Before discussing this latter concept, it is crucial here to note that Mignolo emphasizes the character of the colonial/modern world-system as both a theoretical object and a locus of enunciation, thus bringing to the fore "the geopolitics of knowledge" (Mignolo 2008, 229). By relocating the place of theoretical production to the local histories of modern colonialism, this epistemic act reveals a drastically different interpretation of world history from hegemonic readings that presume the inherent validity of modernity as their over-arching narrative.[10] With its foundations in the conquest of America, the modern/colonial world-system identifies coloniality as constitutive of modernity against Eurocentric interpretations that relegate it to the status of an accidental and, thus reconcilable, derivative (Grosfoguel 2011, 11).[11] By tracing the various permutations of coloniality across *modern* history, including the "post-colonial" era of various geohistorical locations, the modern/colonial world-system indicates a logic that survives the period of official colonial administrations to become entrenched as a principle of contemporary global social organization, hence the designation "global coloniality" often used to describe its current modality (Grosfoguel 2011, 13).

The "coloniality of power,"[12] mentioned in the above quote, is thus central to understanding the modern/colonial world-system. While this notion is comprehensive, Grosfoguel suggests further that "[w]hat is new in the 'coloniality of power' perspective is how the idea of race and racism becomes the organizing principle that structures all of the multiple hierarchies of the world-system" (2011, 10). Although the coloniality of power is a complex logic that operates across the social field in all its diversity, I am primarily concerned in this article with its operation in the sphere of knowledge and subjectivity, which, as Colombian philosopher Santiago Castro-Gomez has pointed out, "cannot be reduced to economic, political, and military domination of the world by Europe, [but] involves also and *primarily* the epistemic foundations that supported the hegemony of European models of production of knowledge in modernity" (280, emphasis J.C.). Thus within this theoretical framework, race, as a category of social classification, is understood as an essential mediation in the consolidation of Western epistemological hegemony. Crucial to the development and management of this epistemic dominance, according to Mignolo, is the subordination of other forms of knowledge and culture, historically articulated through "colonial difference" as the condition of possibility of the coloniality of power and a strategy that provides "the legitimacy for the subalternization of

10 While Mignolo states that this concept was developed from the experience and consciousness of "Creolo/mestizo/European immigrant[s]," I interpret the concepts developed by the MCD project as gifts that can help Indigenous thought and movements articulate decolonial projects.

11 Grosfoguel actually argues that there is a crucial prehistory to this system that begins with the Spanish "Reconquista" of the Iberian Peninsula and the genocide of women deemed witches in medieval Europe. See Grosfoguel (2013).

12 The concept "coloniality of power" was introduced in the late 1980s by Peruvian sociologist Anibal Quijano. See his "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America" (2000).

knowledges and the subjugation of people" (2012, 16). He defines colonial difference as "the classification of the planet in the modern/colonial imaginary, by enacting coloniality of power, an energy and machinery to transform differences into values" (2012, 13). The "line of colonial differences," he argues elsewhere, "traced the separation between 'humanitas' and 'anthropos,' and therefore was the necessary condition for inventing the epistemic and ontological differences and then making the lines appear neutral and objective" (2011, 90). Accordingly, it is through the historical production of colonial difference that the hegemony of Western epistemology naturalizes itself as *the* locus of enunciation, which grounds a territorial epistemology that is monotopic and monological, displacing the focus of epistemic labour to the domain of the enunciated (the known) away from the enunciation (the knowing subject) and thereby effacing its location in the process.[13] Mignolo elaborates on the logic of this operation in the following manner:

> The simultaneous logic of disavowal and dependency of all possible loci of enunciation (from religious to economic, from legal to political, from ethical to erotic) is the hidden logic of modernity, the logic that justifies its place as guiding light and point of arrival, on the one hand, and of disavowal and dependency on the other. This logic is the logic of coloniality put in place, for the modern/colonial world, during the European Renaissance. (2003, 442)

Other scholars have referred to this process as "epistemicide."[14]

Furthermore, by delineating the notion of the human[15] through colonial discourses in their various forms across time, whether "as Christian conversion, civilizing mission, development, and market democracy" (Mignolo 2011, 441), the modern/colonial world-system constitutes its "interiority" (realm of humanitas) through the invention of its "exteriority" (location of the anthropos). However, these metaphors should not be understood in ontological terms, a point that Colombian-American anthropologist Arturo Escobar is quick to point out: "[i]n no way should this exteriority be thought of as a pure ontological outside, untouched by the modern. Exteriority refers to an outside that is precisely constituted as difference by a hegemonic discourse" (168-69). Thus, what is at stake in this conceptualization is not "the ontology of the world," but the possibility of identifying loci of enunciation, or,

13 For a thorough discussion of this development see Grosfoguel (2012).

14 See for instance Grosfoguel (2013).

15 The distinction between ontological and epistemic difference is useful for understanding the production of colonial difference. By attributing ontological "equality" to the "barbarian" or "primitive," subordination becomes justified on the basis of epistemic deficiencies that, in turn, correspond to some form of ontological inferiority. Granting formal 'human' status legitimizes a form of didactic violence. See Mignolo's discussion of De Vitoria's strategy of defending the rights of Amerindians (Mignolo 2011, 279).

rather, the conditions of their possibility and potential, negated in the process of determining "legitimate" knowledge (Mignolo 2012, 338). This is why Mignolo suggests that decolonial reason be conceived as the rationality of different loci of enunciation (Mignolo 2012, 116). Colonial difference becomes the epistemic standpoint from which the possibility of developing this rationality emerges. In its diverse enactments throughout the modern/colonial world-system, colonial difference opens up (a) space(s), as locus of enunciation, from which to think beyond the logic of coloniality and the modern/colonial world-system precisely by foregrounding the essence of this exteriority as constitutive of the world-system and the epistemic potential of its "borders" in which many subaltern people(s) dwell existentially. Accordingly, it is crucial that this site be understood as a starting point from which to think decolonially, and not merely instrumentalized as a way of suggesting that certain subaltern positions can be thought independently of the logic of coloniality. Colonial difference introduces a radical notion of relationality or at least the possibility of relationality as epistemic diversity beyond the logic of coloniality. It is within this framework that Mignolo characterizes decolonization as

> the type of deconstruction operation […] [that involves] maintaining and undoing the colonial difference from the colonial difference itself – that is to say, maintaining the *difference* under the assumption that 'we are all human' although undoing the *coloniality of power* that converted differences into values and hierarchies. (Mignolo 2002, 239)

In this sense, decolonization cannot be reduced to an anti-colonial ideology, but a project guided by a logic of decoloniality "understood as the multiple and varied forms of recreating the matrix of power, knowledge, and being, as well as of culture and structure, beyond the Manichean divisions that inhere at the center of modernity/coloniality" (Maldonado-Torres 2012, 3). Hence, the emergence within this overall framework of the triad modernity/coloniality/decoloniality as inseparable elements of a concept and project that seeks to stimulate a plurality of responses to coloniality. In this vain, Mignolo has developed the notion of "border thinking" to characterize a form of epistemology that emerges from colonial difference as locus of enunciation and decolonial project; a notion that I will address in more detail below.

Lastly, it is important to emphasize with regards to Simpson's observation above that all forms of identity produced within the modern/colonial world-system become suspect when considered ontologically. As Mignolo suggests, "[t]hese [identities] are precisely the forms of identification that contribute to the reproduction of the imaginary of the modern/colonial world system and the coloniality of power and knowledge implicit in the geopolitical articulation of the world" (2012, 171). Questioning these identities, and recognizing the logic of coloniality that underlies them, therefore, is crucial for the recovery of the 'radical' and 'revolutionary' parts of Anishinaabeg knowledge. Fundamentalism, conversely, affirms oppressed identities

constituted within the formation of the global system without heeding this logic at the heart of their formation. In this sense, the modern/colonial world-system may be understood as an epistemic and geopolitical category that enables us, through the enactment of Aanjigone, to orient ourselves on a macro scale. With this conceptual apparatus in mind, we can begin to address the problem alluded to above by Grosfoguel of thinking from a "subaltern epistemic location" within the modern/colonial world-system. I turn now to a discussion of this possibility with regards to the Anishinaabeg tradition of harvesting "manoomin," which I attempt to articulate as an epistemic standpoint from colonial difference.

Manoomin is not wild rice

"To call manoomin a plant is to demean it in the eyes of many Anishinaabeg."
Kathi Avery Kinew

The Anishinaabeg tradition of harvesting wild rice is, following Kathi Avery Kinew, first and foremost a system of governance (1995). As such it belongs to a complex process involving political, economic and spiritual relations and responsibilities. For the reader unfamiliar with this tradition, I offer a description of this practice, albeit brief. According to Brenda Child, the process begins long before the harvest with the selection of a committee whose responsibility is to observe the ecological conditions affecting the rice during the growing season. In certain regions, at least historically, women were the central agents of the harvest and binding ricing beds into sheaves in order to mark the territories where they had legal entitlements to the rice (Child, 24, 25). During Manoominikegiizis, the ricing moon, which is the Anishinaabeg designation for the time corresponding roughly to September, the rice is harvested by canoe with cedar knockers. The stalks are gently tapped allowing the rice to fall into the canoe while some drops to the bottom of the lake for regeneration. The canoe is propelled by a second person using a long pole. Prayers, songs and stories accompany the harvest. Afterwards the rice is parched, winnowed, and hulled through a variety of methods, many of which have changed over time. The entire process, which involves many different community members, is a "model of intergenerational cooperation and learning" (Child, 25). It concludes with a community feast and thanksgiving. As a gift from the Creator, manoomin is a sacred food that signifies a spiritual relationship between Anishinaabeg people and the Creator, which, as such, forms the basis of a fundamental responsibility and a core element of some Anishinaabeg systems of governance (Kinew, 87).

On the other hand, modern taxonomy classifies wild rice under the designation "*Zizania aquatica*,"[16] a categorization that belongs to a system based on a European

16 "*Zizania*" derives from the Greek 'zizanion' meaning "a wild weedy grain that typically grew among wheat crops," http://www.calflora.net/botanicalnames/pageZ.html.

tradition rooted in the work of Carl Linnaeus (Vennum, Jr., 13). This practice and discourse constructs a horizon in which "nature" is objectified and understood as a distinct ontological category. Subsequently, "manoomin" is considered interchangeable with "wild rice;" that is, they become identical by reference to the same "object" in "nature." American-Ecuadorian scholar Catherine Walsh describes the historical context in which this equivalence becomes a function of coloniality:

> The natural/scientific explorations first led by Charles Marie de Condamine, Carl Linnaeus, and Alexander von Humboldt, and locally carried out by "New World" *criollo* elite such as José Celestino Mutis and Francisco José de Caldas in Nueva Granada, objectified and naturalized nature. By exploring, explaining, classifying, and ordering the natural world, these men – whether intentionally or not – imposed a cultural order and control, constitutive of what Mary Louise Pratt has referred to as a "European planetary consciousness." That is "an orientation toward interior exploration and the construction of global-scale meaning through the descriptive apparatus of natural history […] a basic element constructing modern Eurocentrism" (Walsh 2015, 104).

In other words, this scheme of classification comes to designate "Zizania" as the ontological foundation of which 'manoomin' can be understood as a culturally articulated *derivative*, thus furtively placing them within a binary determined by hierarchy. This trick consists in constructing one cultural interpretation as the "ground" of the other, establishing a privileged place from which "knowledge" is produced, according to the geopolitics of Eurocentrism,[17] while relegating the Anishinaabeg understanding to the field of "cultural" production or non-knowledge. It is a "New World" logic which implies that "Zizania" has always been *there* waiting to be discovered and, which conceives of "manoomin" as a contingent form based on inaccurate knowledge. It is established by what Castro-Gómez calls "the hubris of zero degrees," a key factor in the construction of colonial difference, which he describes as the "gaze that attempts to articulate itself independent of its ethnic and cultural center of observation […] [so as to] generate a "universal point of view" (278). With this act the power relations that structure the difference between manoomin and wild rice and consolidate cultural dominance are thus concealed. As such, a basic cultural condition for the capitalist model of nature is established that gives rise to what Escobar calls "cultural distribution conflicts," which "arise from the difference in effective power associated with particular cultural meanings and practices" (14). The logic of coloniality places these determinations in an asymmetrical relation while the hubris of zero degrees, moreover, provides the basis from which to justify the

17 Although I do not focus in this article on the function of colonial difference in the dispossession of Indigenous lands, it is the primary subtext of what I am currently discussing.

dispensability of traditions such as manoomin and its concomitant subjectivities, producing arguments that are well-documented and prevalent across colonial discourses in which colonial difference is enacted.[18]

Although Anishinaabe mobilizations around manoomin challenge this ontology, the tendency to assume the neutrality of translation indicates just how deeply ingrained coloniality is in the domain of knowledge/subjectivity as well as in the formation of what is understood by nature. While people may claim that translation is acceptable for the sake of practicality, I am suggesting that there is more at stake. If we accept manoomin and wild rice as interchangeable, we overlook this translation as a seemingly neutral and harmless act and unwittingly accept a discursive construction that legitimizes itself on the basis of colonial difference. Schiwy and Mignolo have argued that

> translation [has] contributed to the construction of hierarchical dichotomies that have imposed certain rules and directionalities of transculturation. Translation helped build the colonial difference between Western European languages (languages of the sciences, knowledge, the locus of enunciation) and the rest of the languages on the planet (languages of culture and religion and the locus of the enunciated). (2003, 4)

The failure to see the power differential between these concepts and the acceptance of the proposed neutrality of language in which knowledge is articulated, leads one to affirm, albeit tacitly, the universal epistemic subject of Western Eurocentric knowledge, an epistemology that grounds an "ontology of essences [according to which] there is only one reality, and the epistemic struggle is for truth of that mono-topic and homogeneous world" (Mignolo 2012, xvii). This corresponds to a "territorial epistemology" [and] "an epistemology of war […] against competitive ideologies, as well as with decolonial ideologies that do not intend to compete but to delink" (Mignolo, xvii). Evidently, this is a disavowal of the possibility of producing knowledge from an Anishinaabeg locus of enunciation. In other words, by using these words interchangeably, we remain within a vicious epistemic circle predicated upon the *a priori* illegitimacy of manoomin as a knowledge practice. As I will argue shortly, a reflection on manoomin, as referred to *by Anishinaabe political actors*, cannot be reduced to the assumption of its equivalence with wild rice, although the

18 For instance, Frances Densmore's 1929 report to the Bureau of American Ethnology notes that U.S. Department of Agriculture agronomist Charles E. Chambliss "was in charge of rice investigations for the USDA and favored a scientific approach to wild rice cultivation by non-Indians […] Chambliss regarded Indigenous methods of tending and harvesting wild rice as 'simple,' saying that the Ojibwe harvested 'the grain in a very primitive way' (Child 211). See also the myth created by early missionaries referred to by Kathi Avery Kinew as the "they reap but do not sow" myth (1995, 68).

language used to clarify these movements, both internal and external to them, does not necessarily call attention to this dimension.

On the other hand, a contextualization of this translation within the coloniality of power framework foregrounds its strategic dimension, which institutionalizes colonial difference and relegates manoomin to the realm of "culture" within a dominant modernist ontology. It thereby delegitimizes all Anishinaabeg accounts pertaining to manoomin as "myth" or "legend" with no epistemic value. While attention to colonial difference enables us to identify the collapse of manoomin into wild rice and its simultaneous erasure as a form of knowledge, it is crucial to stress that what follows from this inquiry is not an effort to affirm a cultural relativism devoid of ethical and political imperatives. Escobar suggests that cultural distribution conflicts "do not emerge out of cultural difference per se, but out of the difference that this difference makes in the definition of social life: whose norms and meaning-making practices define the terms and values that regulate social life" (14). The (re)introduction of the cultural/ontological sphere, understood geohistorically and thus contingently, in reflections on colonial difference, therefore, "shifts the study of cultural difference from the modernist concern with multiculturalism to the distributive effects of cultural dominance (coloniality) and struggles around it" (14). Mignolo reinforces this point by suggesting that

> [t]he idea of "cultural difference" is indeed an invention of modern imperial discourses that function by hiding the power differential; the "difference" is indeed 'colonial' rather than cultural. That is, it is a difference that justifies exploitation, control, and domination of one sector of the population over another […] "Cultural difference" calls for relativism, while "colonial difference" calls for liberation from epistemic imperial powers (2003, 439-440).

Thus, the analytic of colonial difference functions as a means of restoring the "cultural" to the level of politics. By calling attention to the ontological differences at the heart of these power relations, it exposes the logic of coloniality as a means by which the political is negated through the domestication of culture as an object of management according to larger systemic imperatives (themselves cultural). This is why Escobar suggests that conflicts of the sort I am discussing, understood through colonial difference, imply a "political ontology" (15). The deep relationality introduced by thinking from colonial difference opens up the possibility of a universal project not in terms of abstract universals but as pluriversality in the sense of many worlds or relational ontologies (Grosfoguel 2011). Thus, a movement towards pluriversality departs from the exteriority of the modern/colonial world-system by challenging the logic of which this exteriority is a function. It is through colonial

difference, as loci of enunciation[19] that marginalized and suppressed ontologies regain their political force by becoming explicitly relational through a consciousness of their entanglement in the logic of coloniality. This epistemic act calls for the suspension of identities constituted by the classification of the modern/colonial world-system for the purpose of its management. Furthermore, it has led many movements engaged in such struggles to conceptualize their goals in terms of interculturality understood as a project concerned with "bringing about effective dialogue [between] cultures in contexts of power" (Escobar, 14). As a decolonial project, interculturality presupposes the rationality of constructing loci of enunciation (epistemic diversity) as a basic condition of its possibility and, equally, for the appearance of the political.[20] In the next section I look at the meaning of manoomin in the context of Anishinaabeg political claims in order to grasp its sense beyond an identity with wild rice and its inferiorization through translation as a function of colonial difference.

From Manoomin to Anishinaabe-manoomin

In 2011, a group of Anishinaabeg activists from various bands across the Minnesota region founded 'Protect Our Manoomin,' an unincorporated organization formed to defend manoomin against the threat of contamination linked to the mining industry.[21] The following is an excerpt from the 'Mission Statement and Declaration' published on their website:

> Article 1: Inherent Rights of Manoomin[22]
>
> 1. As a living being, manoomin has the following inherent rights;
> a) the right to life and to exist;
> b) the right to be respected;
> c) the right to regenerate its bio-capacity and to continue its vital cycles and processes free from human disruptions;
> d) the right to maintain its identity and integrity as a distinct, self-regulating and interrelated being.

19 For the purpose of clarity, it helps to repeatedly highlight the dual nature of colonial difference as both an object of theory and an epistemic standpoint that opens up other epistemic possibilities and projects.

20 See Lewis R. Gordon 2011 for a discussion on the conditions of the political and politics as a condition of appearance.

21 "Protect Our Manoomin", http://protectourmanoomin.weebly.com/who-we-are.html.

22 "Protect Our Manoomin", http://protectourmanoomin.weebly.com/protect-our-manoomin---mission-statement--declaration.html.

It is clear from the language that "Manoomin" is not simply conceived as an object to be appropriated, whether as commodity or sustenance, but as a subject.[23] But what does it mean for Manoomin to have rights? Evidently, these are claims made by someone, namely a group of Anishinaabe, for whom Manoomin is valuable and for whom that value is under threat, hence the exigency of the declaration as a political act. But value as a concept implies some measure of instrumentality while rights conventionally imply a subject to whom the category of dignity can be extended. A similar understanding is echoed in a recent article published in *Anishinabek News* reporting on a panel discussion in Peterborough, Ontario entitled "The Challenges of Reconciliation: Manoomin":

> In any case, *the wild rice is speaking* and people are listening. The message is clear: it is up to all of us to stop the possession of Indigenous lands, rights, languages, foods, medicines, bodies, and cultures and to encourage and to teach our children to develop a deep love for the land and the waters. *This is what Manoomin is teaching us.* (Kapyrka 2015; emphasis J.C.)

Here, again, we notice that Manoomin is spoken about as a subject. It is Manoomin that is speaking and teaching us.

What is at stake, then, in the struggles to protect Manoomin, are the conditions that make Manoomin possible, or, put another way, the social relations that enable people to have a relationship with manoomin as 'Manoomin' not wild rice. While Manoomin is manifested through certain social relations, its recognition as subject is simultaneously the condition of regulating those relations according to certain social ideals. In other words, to speak about the dignity of Manoomin is to argue simultaneously for the dignity of a social-subject that makes such a relation possible. Manoomin, unlike wild rice, is a set of intersubjective relations, not an "object."[24] This characterization, however, implies a general epistemological shift from a denotative to an enactive epistemology (Mignolo 2012, 26). This critical move, which is *facilitated by the identification of colonial difference as historically constitutive of cultural difference within the modern/colonial world-system*, enables us to grasp Manoomin as a performative function and begin a reflection on it as an ethico-political praxis and epistemic standpoint beyond its subordination as a mere "cultural practice." Thus I am trying to identify an epistemic location that resists the reduction of "Indigenous knowledge" to a form of technical or environmentalist rationality. It is under the hegemony of modern epistemology that "Indigenous knowledge" has

23 I, therefore, retain the capital "M" when referring to it in this sense to emphasize the use of a proper name.

24 Although it could be argued that wild rice also refers to a set of intersubjective relations I am trying to foreground and contrast an ontology that does not place nature "outside" the context of social relations.

been granted some concessions in the name of conflict mitigation, or, as Escobar suggests, due to the power differential, has been "refunctionalized at the service of" dominant ontologies without challenging "foundational modern assumptions, such as the divide between nature and culture" (15). Characterized in this way, Indigenous knowledge remains non-essential, politically speaking, and contributes to the perception of Indigenous peoples as one "interest group" among others while reproducing the imaginary of the colonial/modern world-system predicated on the denial of Manoomin as a locus of enunciation; as such, it forecloses the decolonial imperative of epistemic diversity.

Returning to the examples above, it appears at first glance that we encounter a paradox: the essence of Manoomin, as a gift from the Creator[25] grounded within Anishinaabeg cosmology, is contingent upon political circumstances. But this is only paradoxical if we dismiss colonial difference as a condition of our contemporary social reality *and* as a locus of enunciation. Provided colonial difference remains invisible, the attribution of rights to Manoomin appears to be a senseless fetishism of nature born of a "primitive" epistemology. Although the analytic of colonial difference suggests the futility of attempting to reconstitute isolated or pure ontological orders, it signals a challenge to the logic of coloniality from the exteriority of the modern/colonial world-system's borders, which allows us to think the nature of human difference beyond a logic of hierarchical order and deal with it both politically and ethically. Therefore, against an epistemicide that forges primitive culture, Manoomin should be understood as an ontological horizon that belongs to the historical complexity of contemporary social and political reality. This conceptualization, however, requires what Mignolo has called "border thinking." Drawing on the work of Moroccan philosopher Abdelhebir Khatibi, he suggests that border thinking, as a form of thinking from colonial difference, is predicated upon a "double critique," which he characterizes as a "criticism of […] imperial discourses […] as well as of national discourses asserting identity and differences articulated in and by imperial discourses" (2012, 69). Thus border thinking, as an epistemic location, requires a simultaneous critique of both Western and Indigenous fundamentalisms as dogmatic affirmations of difference that presuppose coloniality not as locus of enunciation, but as condition of possibility. It implies thinking "from both traditions, and, at the same time, from neither of them" (69), a type of "thinking from dichotomous concepts rather than ordering the world in dichotomies" (85). With this approach, the paradox above becomes meaningless because it shifts the task of asserting and maintaining the absolute truth of a particular world order to a project of dealing with difference in its historicity and against the logic of coloniality and its mythology of linear temporality.

Subjectively, this also implies a double operation, one that Nelson Maldonado-Torres refers to as the "teleological suspension of identity and universality" (155).

25 This is a common Anishinaabeg expression of manoomin. See for instance Kathy Kinew 1995.

This act, which presupposes an awareness of colonial difference, is simultaneously directed at both the modern subject and subaltern identities constituted within the modern/colonial world-system. Maldonado-Torres characterizes it in his discussion of Frantz Fanon as follows:

> Confronting a reality where imperial politics violates the ordinariness of the extraordinary [ethical praxis that characterizes normative human relations], Fanon defended an ethico-political praxis of liberation. This praxis entails a sort of teleological suspension of identity and of universality in the interest of the humanization of the world." (155)

Here we find a complement to the Anishinaabeg notion of Aanjigone as a critical attitude that opens up the intellectual space for this suspension. Consequently, this act provides the conditions for the double critique mentioned above and situates us within a border epistemology by opening up the possibilities of dialogue and imagination beyond the pseudo-absolutist identities and social relations forged through the coloniality of power. In the context of Anishinaabeg struggles to uphold the sacred relationship with the Creator that Manoomin embodies, we could designate Anishinaabe-manoomin as a form of consciousness and project in which the performance of this double movement takes place in contrast and against an assertion of Manoomin understood metaphysically and without regard for colonial difference. As such, it signals a thinking and doing which has nothing to do with a premodern/colonial practice, but is precisely a locus of enunciation that emerges *historically* from colonial difference as a decolonial response to the logic of coloniality. It thereby enables the recovery of Anishinaabe as a tradition of humanist reflection by locating Manoomin as an epistemic practice with a *claim* to universality.

In order to situate this notion of Anishinaabe-manoomin as a form of humanism more precisely, I appeal once again to Nelson Maldonado-Torres and his discussion of Fanon's notion of the "damned" or racialized and colonized subjects. Drawing on a linguistic analysis that illustrates the etymological relation between "damné" (French for "damned") and "donner" (French for "to give"), Maldonado-Torres suggests that

> if we follow this interpretation, [the damned] is the one who cannot give precisely because things are taken from him. The colonized is the "damné" in the sense that the colonial condition takes away from her, or at least radically restricts, the possibilities of giving. (2008, 142)

In this sense, I interpret "giving" as the ability of colonized peoples and cultures to share the dignity in which their epistemic traditions are understood as resources for a collective human project. The false universal of colonial relations is precisely the reduction of humanity to a system in which the colonizer has a complete monopoly on the capacity to give, to make both practical and epistemic contributions to the

human community (2008, 143). Afro-Jewish philosopher Lewis Gordon corroborates this notion when he claims that

> [d]emonstrating this falseness expands the normative universe, or, better, pluriverse. It also brings together terms that the system attempted to keep apart. This fusion is a creolization at the level of knowledge that acknowledges the underlying reality of culture and practiced values. (2015, 128)

Gordon, thus, argues that theorists engaged in decolonial thought and politics

> are actually reaching for more *universalizing* practices. Although not *the* universal, because of the fundamental incompleteness at the heart of being human, the paradox of reaching beyond particularity is the simultaneous humility of understanding the expanse and possibility of reality and human potential. (2015, 130)

Thus what is being expressed here is not an abstract universality in which the form of humanity is predetermined by a particular culture, but a concrete universal that constructs itself from the vantage point of the oppressed as the effort to continually transcend the conditions that reproduce their situation. To repeat Maldonado-Torres above, it is in the interests of humanization that this form of humanism is conceived and deployed in modern contexts determined by the logic of coloniality.

This project of humanization, which includes both colonized and colonizer, has an intellectual predecessor in the Anishinaabeg Seven Fires Prophecy,[26] particularly the prophecy of the Seventh Fire and its possibility of an Eighth Fire. The Seven Fires Prophecy narrative recounts that

> [i]n a time of peace and flourishment, seven prophets came to the Nishinaabeg people and made seven predictions for the future. The seven prophets also outlined an epic journey from the east coast of Turtle Island [North America] to the western shores of the Great Lakes; they encouraged our people to make that journey as a protection against the coming colonizers. (Simpson 2011, 65)

For the purposes of my argument I do not focus here on the complexity of this prophecy in its entirety, but will simply mention that the first six prophecies announced the arrival of a new people (white European settler-colonizers) that would cause great suffering for the Anishinaabe, but also the foreknowledge of resistance

26 See Benton-Banai (1988) for a comprehensive narrative of the Anishinaabeg Seven Fires Prophecy.

and survival that make the Seventh and Eights Fires possible. The Seventh Fire is the time of revitalization, whereby knowledge and traditions protected and cared for by the Ancestors are rethought and taken up again with fresh insight and passion, which gives rise to a new people: the Oshkimaadiziig (the New People) (Simpson 2008, 14). This is the time in which we now live (14). According to Simpson, "[t]he foremost responsibility of the 'new people' is to pick up those things previous generations have left behind by nurturing relationships with Elders […] the work of the Oshkimaadiziig determines the outcome of the Eighth Fire, an eternal fire to be lit by all humans" (14). In other words, it is a moment that contains the potential of transcending the racial-colonial relations of the current system, a transcendence that is embodied in the human relations realized in the age of the Eighth Fire. For this reason, Simpson claims that the Seven Fires Prophecy is "[p]erhaps the most epic narrative in Nishinaabeg thought concerning processes of mobilization […] in relation to colonialism, decolonization and resurgence" (2011, 65).

Contrary to an interpretation founded on colonial difference that would place this prophecy in a category of some timeless and depoliticized "legend," I suggest, following Simpson, that its meaning is based on a profound historical consciousness in order to relate it to the foregoing discussion on humanism. Simpson states that "[f]or Nishnaabeg people, our prophecy is the foundation of our resistance and of our resurgence" (2008, 14). As such, the prophecy becomes a normative horizon in which the project of decolonization orients itself and finds meaning. In this sense, Oshkimaadiziig may be understood as a mode of Anishinaabe conceived relationally, that is, through the historical context of relations defined by the logic of coloniality within the modern/colonial world-system. As such, Oshkimaadiziig becomes a concrete precondition for the possibility of realizing Anishinaabe understood as the normative horizon of ethical human relations that transcend the historical system of domination. In other words, we can conceive of it as a mode of being that develops from a consciousness of colonial difference and positions itself from colonial difference as an epistemic standpoint. This is why Simpson argues that "[r]esurgence is our original instruction" (Simpson 2011, 66). To speak of original instruction in this context is already to acknowledge the anticipatory realization of Anishinaabe. If we recall the Creation story in which Anishinaabe is understood as the original human, we can interpret Oshkimaadiziig as those who do not attempt to recreate the world at the time of Creation, but who attempt to transcend dehumanizing relations with a memory of that original unity. The translation of Anishinaabe as Oshkimaadiziig in the time of the Seventh Fire suggests a profound understanding of the historicity of differences and the imperative to transcend dehumanizing relations. It is this transformation based on circumstance, of Anishinaabe into Oshkimaadiziig, which defines the humanistic core at centre of the concept of Anishinaabe and rejects the closure of an ethnocentric and totalizing ontology.

Moreover, to ground humanism in the Seven Fires Prophecy is to acknowledge the critical role of Ancestors in the humanist project. It is on the basis of the respon-

sibility of the Ancestors that this humanism is made possible due to the fact that the fulfillment of these responsibilities opens up the possibility of resurgence, which in turn is a historical condition for humanization. While the present duty of acknowledging the fulfillment of Ancestral responsibility directs us to the past, it simultaneously acquires its sense as an act of humanization opened up by the foundational horizon of Anishinaabe in the Creation Story and is thus directed to the future. Characterized in this way, it does not articulate a temporal linearity of dogmatic progress, but a relentless attempt to locate the past in the future in the name of humanization. As such, cosmology, against modern epistemicide, becomes historically indispensable to a politics of decolonization. Coloniality attempts to transfix epistemic resources such as the Seven Fires Prophecy into ahistorical dogma, which, subsequently, can only have an ethnocentric value. In contrast, this interpretation defines an epistemic position that resists the reduction of thought to the non-relational thinking of modern/colonial epistemology grounded upon a philosophy of essence. Provided we maintain consciousness of Oshkimaadiziig as a mode of Anishinaabe, we do not collapse into a dogmatism grounded in ahistorical mythology. The fact that this mode of being is already anticipated in the prophecy of the Seventh Fire indicates the presence of a critical epistemic resource within Anishinaabeg thought for social-historical transformation. It also suggests a consciousness of the intrinsic incompleteness of human being in the very notion of Anishinaabe in the sense of Gordon's analysis. Simpson echoes this when she states that "[i]f we are going to make it to that Eighth fire, then we all have the responsibility for picking up those Gifts – for honouring them and *making them relevant* in our lives and in our nations, *without rigidity and without exclusion*" (2008, 210; emphasis J.C.). We could designate this interpretation as a form of Eighth Fire humanism.

Thus, to emphasize, suggesting that Anishinaabe is a humanist tradition is not indicative of a disembodied form of universal thought predicated upon ontological closure. Rather, it belongs to the construction of a pluriversal order in which the possibility of thinking belongs to all peoples with dignity beyond the "natural" entitlements of Western civilization and its dehumanizing project. The humanism advocated here is not founded on a hegemonic subject, but is developed by a plurality of subjects and cultural contributions. Anishinaabe should be understood as a unique and crucial contribution to it. Recall that I am grounding my argument on the historicity of difference and its colonial mediation. Therefore, the imperative to reconceive the logic of these relations is not mandated by the dialectical unfolding of a transcendental subject otherwise known as humanity (or Anishinaabe), but by the constellation of projects in their efforts to realize epistemic diversity in the unrelenting struggle against the logic of colonial difference. In this way, the positivity of this humanization project may be conceived as the surprising discoveries of collaboration and difference, never known beforehand, born of the perpetual negation of intolerable social relations conveyed as universals.

The teleological suspension of identity and universality, and its fundamental attitude, Aanjigone, moreover, opens up the possibility of a deeper form of relationality between Manoomin and Anishinaabe, as a particular form of human reality, beyond its classification by the coloniality of power and the identities forged therein. It thereby facilitates an understanding of Anishinaabe as a form of subjectivity, that is, as an agency with the ability to give thus enabling relationships that "the system attempted to keep apart" and the construction of a collective human project. This is the sense in which I attribute Anishinaabe to a reflection on Manoomin in the notion of Anishinaabe-manoomin.

However, it should be emphasized that this teleological suspension is historically contingent. Its temporality is contextual and therefore not permanent. The "openness" won through the suspension of identity and universality is always mediated strategically. For instance, Indigenous nationalism will continue to assert itself provided that cognitive justice remains outside the terms of "reconciliation" in countries like Canada. In contrast to Nandita Sharma who claims that "the making of new social bodies is not an epistemological problem but an ontological one" (80), decoloniality is precisely the articulation of projects that recognize epistemicide as constitutional of the status quo. Thus the imperative of constructing loci of enunciation may require strong assertions of identity in times when epistemicide is presupposed rather than addressed by political agendas. It is worth recalling here the distinction between social and epistemic location. While coloniality, as a locus of enunciation, opens up the possibility of this distinction, it does not simply dismiss oppressed social locations as negative moments within a dialectic, which would simply be an affirmation of the dominant totality as universal; rather, it conceptualizes social location as a crucial vantage point from which the false universal of the modern/colonial world-system is experienced corporeally[27] and theorized. The recognition of epistemicide is the result of a radical historicization from the social location of oppressed and racialized peoples, which recognizes the complicity of knowledge in the reproduction of colonial relations while identifying an exteriority that is both intrinsic to the operation of the logic of coloniality and the location of decolonial possibilities. The epistemic location, in other words, is rendered possible by the exteriority identified through the experience and reflection from the social location. Sharma, conversely, presupposes the closed totality of the modern world-system (in which colonialism is derivative, not constitutive as coloniality teaches), as a point of departure and therefore calls for "decolonizing decolonization" as the wholesale liquidation of Indigenous nationalism, which appears as the totalization of a particular social position against the social totality. Although Sharma calls on us

27 See Walter Mignolo 2011 for a discussion of the "body-politics of knowledge," particularly when he states, "[t]hus body-politics is the decolonial response to state-managed biopolitics: body-politics describes decolonial technologies ratified by bodies who realized, first, that they were considered less human, and second, that the very act of describing them as less human was a radical un-human consideration" (140).

to adopt a properly historical attitude and heed the irrevocable changes wrought in the wake of 1492, she pays little attention to the depth of coloniality in the formation of those identities and social relations at the epistemological level. Although she mentions the role of representation in the classification of peoples within "a single field of power," there is no indication in her argument of how the cohesion of this system is created and maintained. As such, representation appears to be conceived as a neutral medium with the aim of a proper correspondence with reality; in other words, she presupposes the monotopic and monologic epistemology of Western modernity whose sole concern is the nature of the enunciated having concealed the geopolitics of knowledge through domination and epistemicide: a thoroughly dehistorized epistemic standpoint. Race, understood through the coloniality of power, is a mediation whereby identities are not only invented to justify exploitation, segregation or exclusion, but identities born through the negation of epistemic alterity in the very production of a hegemonic epistemology as a condition of managing the system. Racialization as a central axis in the construction of the modern Subject simultaneously marks the site of vestiges/potential of non-modern loci of enunciation. The analysis of how racialization functions must extend beyond the discrimination of groups vis-à-vis the common good to include a theory of it as the constitution of manageable entities through epistemicide understood in the widest sense to include the inferiorization and negation of language, knowledge, culture, spirituality, etc. Therefore, epistemicide and cognitive justice, to repeat, cannot be skirted in the formation of "new forms of subjectivity and conspecificity" (Sharma 176). While I am in agreement that an ideology of autochthony can lead to a vicious dogmatism, Sharma does not foreground the conditions from which Indigenous nationalism emerges and justifies itself (never in absolutist terms, of course, and not simply as a result of epistemicide). Her position relies too heavily upon ethics with insufficient attention to the social conditions for such relations.

Herein lies the challenge of thinking through a politics that does not abandon ethics and vice versa. After all, decoloniality presupposes ethics in its condemnation of coloniality and its efforts to articulate a thinking and doing beyond the relationality of its logic. However, ethical projects may easily become blind to historical circumstances. Lewis Gordon has formulated this problematic in the following manner:

> For politics to exist, there must be discursive opposition. Such activity involves communicative possibilities that rely on the suspension of violent or repressive forces. In effect, that makes politics also a condition of appearance. To be political is to emerge, to appear, to exist. Colonization involves the elimination of discursive opposition between the dominant group and the subordinated group […] Since the ethical life requires others, a challenge is here raised against models of decolonial practice that center ethics […] The additional challenge, then, is to cultivate the

> options necessary for both political and ethical life […] It is not that ethics must be rejected. It simply faces its teleological suspension, especially where, if maintained, it presupposes instead of challenges colonial relations (Gordon 2011, 100).

It is a consciousness of this tension between the affirmation of identity and its suspension, as well as that between ethics and politics, that is necessary to maintain in order to articulate "Indigenous nationhood," for example, as a decolonial project. In other words, it requires a rigorous critique of the sources from which it builds its movement, and to know strategically when to engage in a teleological suspension and when to affirm an identity resolutely. This is also the space where a dialogue between settler colonialism and coloniality may be fruitfully developed. The locus of enunciation opened up by the analytic of settler colonialism, predicated on the suspension of the "universality" of the state as "settler state," announces the refusal of the identities constituted therein and deploys a strategy for creating the conditions of appearance in Gordon's sense by the rupture of settler normality. Coloniality, as locus of enunciation, draws colonial difference to the foreground in the construction of this exteriority and challenges its logic in order to engage in decolonization as pluriversal project and not simply anti- (settler) colonialism. Neither project is reducible to the other; rather, both presuppose each other and should be developed together as project(s) of decoloniality. Thus Indigenous nationalism, at a given historical moment, may very well be in order strategically speaking, both ethically and politically. I am suggesting that Anishinaabe-manoomin is one form of consciousness in which the tension between the teleological suspension of identity and universality and the affirmation of Anishinaabeg identity may be internalized consciously as a basis for action.

In the political sphere this double movement can be understood as the basis for a project of interculturality in which a dialectical relation between the cultural (understood as the ontological) and the political becomes the crux of a decolonial form of relationality and a larger project of pluriversality. This marks decoloniality not as a war between absolute ontologies, but an operation that internalizes this irreducible tension between culture and politics as constitutive of the political. Therefore, contrary to the rhetoric of modernity,[28] the cultural horizon in which the ontology of Manoomin is articulated is not a politically irrelevant structure, but a fundamental dimension of thinking through difference decolonially within a social structure defined by the logic of coloniality. As such, it has nothing to do with reification, nor an ahistorical ontological order, but belongs to what Escobar refers to as a "theory of difference that is historically specific and contingent […] a response to the present moment that builds on intellectual and political developments in many places" (18).

28 See Walter D. Mignolo 2007 for a discussion about modernity as a rhetoric of salvation that presupposes coloniality.

Anishinaabe-manoomin is thus a particular means of conceiving a politics that struggles to bring about new social relations through a project of interculturality while honouring the Anishinaabeg treaty with Manoomin, a treaty that I will refer to in the following section.

Perhaps we can make a distinction for the purpose of clarity between the interpretations I have given of wild rice, Manoomin and Anishinaabe-manoomin and their corresponding projects:

1- 'Wild rice' is related to the universalization of the projects of taxonomy and commodification. It is Eurocentric and totalizing.
2- 'Manoomin' is a nationalist response to the first project and seeks to secure political and economic control over a resource that is culturally valuable.
3- 'Anishinaabe-manoomin' belongs to a project of interculturality and pluriversality, which is based on a critique of the logic of coloniality from the subaltern side of colonial difference. While it is critical of the first two projects, it only becomes politically viable when it operates in tandem with the second project as a historical condition of its possibility. By internalizing the third project, the second project is able to orient itself as a decolonial project.

A Dialogue with Manoomin

So far I have chiefly written *descriptively* about Manoomin. A decolonial epistemic act implies a shift in the geography of reason, which I have only performed partially up to this point. In order to grasp Manoomin as a locus of enunciation, we need to *think from* it as a source of epistemic creativity emerging from colonial difference.[29] The issue at hand, to reiterate, is not only the challenge of looking to this tradition for epistemic resources, but the fact that this knowledge has been subalternized through colonial difference and its geopolitics of knowledge, which marks Anishinaabe as the object of knowledge as opposed to the site of knowledge production. The construction of this object, subsequently, has given birth to a discourse of authenticity regarding the nature of Anishinaabeg identity whereby legitimate membership is judged on the basis of non-relational terms, whose main criterion is the conformity to essence. Admittedly, one who has a relationship with Manoomin is Anishinaabe. But if we fail to introduce the relationality of thinking from colonial difference, we risk affirming the criteria of an inert cultural construction conceived for the purpose of domination. Therefore, in order to avoid essentializing a particularistic identity as the ground of Manoomin and recognize its dynamism we must shift the location from which we think by fully accepting the language of Manoomin as the identification of a subject.

29 This is crucial for "[i]f postcoloniality is not able to break away from modern epistemology, it would become just another version of it with a different subject matter. It would be, in other words, a theory about a new subject matter but not the constitution of a new epistemological subject that thinks from and about the borders" (Mignolo 2012, 110).

In order to make this epistemic shift, I appeal to Anishinaabekwe scholar Jana-Rae Yerxa who recounts: "I did not realize it then but through these interactions my great grandfather was introducing and familiarizing me with the responsibilities I inherently carry as an Anishinaabe person – responsibilities that are embedded in our treaty with manoomin" (3). Again we encounter Manoomin as a subject only now with whom a concrete relationship is determined through the form of a treaty. A "treaty" is always with *someone* not something. To enter into a treaty with someone, furthermore, implies that one can engage in a dialogue. Thus the form of how this other is conceived determines the nature of the relationship. In this case, the recognition of Manoomin as a subject implies an ethical relationship, which the treaty institutionalizes. Here it is important to acknowledge that manoomin in Anishinaabemowin means "the *good* seed that grows in water" (Child, 24; emphasis J.C.). This reference to 'good,' as belonging to the essence of Manoomin within Anishinaabeg thought, places us squarely within an ethical tradition and praxis of humanization. Therefore, if Manoomin is understood as a treaty partner**,** then we can enter into dialogue with Manoomin to discover who Manoomin is or can be and what the basis of upholding such a treaty might entail beyond identities constructed through the logic of coloniality. By proceeding from colonial difference we could ask Manoomin the following:

"Manoomin, are you racist? Are you sexist? Are you capitalist? Are you Truth? Nationalist? Reconciled? Are you homophobic? Hetero-normative? Is your blood pure? Are you a quarter? An eighth? Are you Bear Clan? Loon Clan? A member of the Conservative party of Canada? Do you have "Indian Status"? Are you Midewiwin? Traditional? Modern? Are you primitive? Progressive? On-reserve? Urban? Are you secular? Religious? Treaty 3? Robinson-Superior? 1835? Ontarian? Are you private property? Do you "own" the land? Are you Marxist-Leninist? Are you a commodity? Are you transgendered? Male? Female? Are you Christian? Canadian? American? Are you monolingual? Are you Neoliberal? Fundamentalist? Are you imperial? Colonial? Are you Indigenous?"

While this list of questions might appear tedious and irrelevant, my point is to place in question the closure of identity that may appear inevitable in the struggle to maintain one's dignity in the face of powerful forces of negation. The range of identities I have mentioned also includes those that have come to be taken for granted as essential characteristics of Indigenous people. My intent is to call for their constant scrutiny as a project and continual effort to locate the dynamism of our traditions. While it is not up to me to provide definitive answers to these questions (nor is it possible), a decolonial critique suggests that these questions will not be settled by simply affirming identities constructed through colonial difference, but by restoring the epistemic grounds from which these questions can be asked. Although particular historical moments will certainly generate positive answers to

some of them, they all, *in principle*, can be answered negatively.[30] Recovering Manoomin as an epistemic standpoint requires us to think of Anishinaabe in its plurality, that is, as a cultural horizon where multiple subjectivities can converge and develop together. To recognize Manoomin as Anishinaabe means, moreover, that Manoomin exceeds the determinations by which it is circumscribed within the modern/colonial world-system, while also functioning as an aspiration for more dignified social relations; in other words, Manoomin is marked by an intrinsic incompleteness and a humanistic ethics. The question of who Manoomin is (Anishinaabe) is simultaneously the question of who can be recognized by Manoomin, that is, following Yerxa, who can enter into a treaty with Manoomin. She states,

> to restore the traditional harvesting practices of manoomin […] is to strengthen and deepen one's understanding of what it means to be Anishinaabe because we learn about who we are from the land and each other […] Our learning, our ways of governing, and who we are is alive […] within manoomin and in our relationships with one another. […] Our treaty relationship with manoomin is based on respect, care, reciprocity, and interdependence. (Yerxa, 164, 163)

This treaty, therefore, is a crucial form of relationality through which the dignity of Anishinaabe is explored, developed and expressed. As a treaty, its conditions for renewal are based on an ongoing dialogue with Manoomin, which, as I suggested above, implies a continuous reflection on the nature of Anishinaabe understood as human being. The essence of Manoomin, as Anishinaabe, therefore, can be understood as an ideal by which the teleological suspension of identity may be oriented in order to expand the relations that constitute Manoomin. In this sense, Anishinaabe-manoomin can be interpreted as the critical consciousness and practice of reflecting upon the diversity of Anishinaabeg subjectivity from colonial difference. By doing so, we can shift the focus away from authenticity based on colonial definitions to a question of upholding the treaty through responsibility and interculturality.

To illustrate this notion I appeal to Yerxa's call for a "Manoomin Movement" (164) as a means of asserting Anishinaabeg self-determination, which, in the face of contemporary social reality, demands a political postulate of nationhood to orient its goals. Anishinaabe-manoomin, as a locus of enunciation, may help in the formation of the political subject that mobilizes this force. After all, in the Anishinaabeg

30 Here I am thinking of Anishinaabeg legal scholar John Borrows when he states that "[i]ndigeneity does not *necessarily* reside in any particular blood, language, land, culture, clan, family grouping, spiritual practice, economic activity, story, teaching, song, relationship, etc. – though these criteria are very important components of belonging in particular contexts. It is misleading to claim that Indigenous societies possess an unalterable central essence or core" (2016, 1). I am even suggesting "Indigeneity" be subject to this scrutiny.

prophecy of the Third Fire "the place where food grows on water"[31] has its origins in migration, that is, a crossing of "borders." Perhaps we can begin to think of this notion not only in a geographical sense or as a circumscribed territory, but also, as a concept of Anishinaabeg political power, a space where Anishinaabeg political subjectivity is constructed and the treaty with Manoomin upheld. In her 2012 book *Fractured Homeland*, Mi'kmaw scholar Bonita Lawrence recounts the episode of the "Rice War," a conflict which took place in the late 1970s when the Ontario provincial government issued a license to a commercial operation interested in harvesting wild rice at Mud Lake, a place where Manoomin had been cared for undisturbed by the Algonquin[32] people for nearly a century until then. This clash would turn into "a development that galvanized the small informal community into taking a stand to protect it and ultimately created the modern community of Ardoch Algonquin First Nation" (Lawrence, 141). As such, it was the Anishinaabeg treaty with Manoomin which lay at the source of this political agency, a treaty which, incidentally, also extended through Manoomin to the Mississauga Nishnaabeg across borders and languages.[33] It was this treaty that consolidated the Algonquin as a people regardless of their unrecognized status within the Canadian state. Moreover, to uphold the treaty during the Rice War,

> a formal alliance was established between Algonquins of Ardoch, other local Aboriginal communities, and the settlers of the Ardoch area. Called IMSet (Indian, Metis and Settlers Wild Rice Association), it enabled the people to focus more proactively on how to protect the wild rice for the future. It became obvious that they needed to consult with academic professionals, to prove legal and moral rights, and to build community awareness programs to maintain connections that had been built during the struggle (Lawrence, 142).

Thus, "the place where food grows on water" was materialized through a multiplicity of agents across borders, all with different relations to Manoomin, but all crucial in their way to the renewal of the treaty under such precarious circumstanc-

31 According to the Third Fire of the Anishinaabe Seven Fires prophecy, after a long migration to the West, the people would arrive at the place where food grows on water, which would mark the place of their chosen ground (Benton-Banai, 89).

32 Some Algonquin or Omàmìwinini people also use the designation Anishinaabe to refer to themselves, a clear indication that this word does not simply denote a particular people but suggests a much more profound concept that extends beyond the borders of colonial divisions. I use this "Algonquin" example here precisely to call attention to this point.

33 See Leanne Simpson's foreword to Paula Sherman's *Dishonour of the Crown: The Ontario Resource Regime in the Valley of the Kiji Sìbì*, where she discusses the diplomacy between the two nations that ensured the survival of Manoomin when construction of the Trent-Severn Waterway was built. Mississauga Elders gave Manoomin to Omàmìwinini Elders in the late 19th century, the same Manoomin that would eventually become embroiled in the Rice War.

es. More than mere resistance, the diversity of peoples that constituted this political power gave rise to a pedagogical opportunity: a place from which to think from Manoomin as a locus of enunciation. I have been suggesting that it is a dialogue with Manoomin, or what I have called Anishinaabe-manoomin, which opens a space for this type of collective subject. This is conception echoes Lewis Gordon when he interprets Frantz Fanon's critique of liberation movements in the following way: "Legitimacy doesn't emerge from the proof of cultural heritage or racial authenticity; it emerges […] from the active engagement in struggles for social transformation and building institutions and ideas that nourish and liberate the formerly colonized" (2015, 126). Although the alliance during the Rice War was temporary and not without its internal tensions, it is interesting to consider the possibility of a 'Manoomin Movement' that would seek to sustain and institutionalize the pedagogical value of these intersections in the effort to democratize epistemology across society and help renew the Anishinaabeg treaty with Manoomin in perpetuity. By orienting action and alliances by this treaty and the dialogue that sustains it, a 'Manoomin Movement' could gather the force necessary to transform social relations forged by the logic of coloniality and restore Manoomin as an epistemic standpoint in its own right and dignity.

Conclusion

In closing I feel it is important to explicitly state that I am not attempting to determine how the Anishinaabeg treaty with Manoomin should be upheld nor who is entitled to participate in it. To do so would be to dismiss the history of Indigenous-settler relations and the great mistrust this violent relationship has engendered. Rather, I have attempted to indicate a way of conceiving of this practice as a dignified epistemic tradition by reflecting on colonial difference as a structural constituent of our contemporary social reality. The lesson of coloniality signals the formative dimension of epistemicide in the creation of subjectivities on both sides of colonial difference; hence, the dangerous tendency to assume the neutrality of language and epistemological categories in the development of decolonial theory and praxis. The inadvertent appropriation of modern epistemological discourse for understanding decolonial struggles runs into the difficulty of attempting to legitimize them within a horizon that is already structured on their inferiorization. Conversely, thinking from and with Indigenous traditions and movements as sites of knowledge production allows us to counteract a reductionism of politics to the totality of a single ontological horizon and discover the source of a political ontology that is attentive to colonial legacies. Escobar argues that "[t]he articulation of struggles across differences may lead to the deepening of democracy – indeed, to questioning the very principles of liberal democracy, if conceived from the colonial difference" (15). It is from this point of departure that we realize Manoomin is not wild rice and the imperative of epistemic diversity and/or the democratization of epis-

temology is foregrounded as an imperative of decolonization. Coloniality enables us to work from and against colonial difference in the construction of our politics and social projects through the identification of cognitive justice as integral to the decolonization of social relations. Anishinaabe-manoomin responds to this imperative as a means of articulating a particular practice as an ongoing dialectical epistemic struggle, which does not harbour an abstract universal as its essence or goal, but a dignified tradition entangled in the logic of coloniality. Thus, we are forced to look beyond the closure of identities in a world regulated by dehumanization and "recognize that the struggle for humanization does not leave cultures untouched" (Maldonado-Torres, 153). Manoomin already knows this; it remains a question of relating to this knowledge and practice.

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Hartmut Lutz

"They Talk, We Listen": Indigenous Knowledges and Western Discourse

Abstract

Since the beginning of Native Studies in the late Sixties and early Seventies North American Aboriginal writers and intellectuals have, again and again, demanded that we unplug our ears and minds and listen to their voices (Deloria, Forbes), but it seems hard to overcome the Eurocentric notion that "all knowledge worth knowing … was created in Europe", and that before their colonization non-European Indigenes had been "sitting on [their] thumbs waiting for enlightenment" (Episkenew). Using a variety of Indigenous interventions, the presentation will focus on some of the possible reasons for the centuries-old European and Euro-American inability to listen to and take seriously Indigenous philosophies and empirical scientific knowledge. Apart from the prevalent European cultural hubris that the achievements of the enlightenment eclipsed, once and for all, any other forms of scientific insight, the inability to listen also hinges on the way in which such insights are conveyed, and on the ethics they entail. If, as J. Armstrong maintains, "science is nature's intelligence", it makes no difference if that intelligence is expressed "through [written] scientific formulae or [spoken] words." Following Armstrong's logic, and acknowledging that Aboriginal oral traditions record, store and transmit centuries and millennia of empirical knowledge about how to live well with the land and all its creatures, we have to acknowledge that empirical knowledge which is conveyed as "theory coming through stories" (Maracle) must be read on a par with such abstract scientific formula as the periodic table.

Résumé

Depuis le début des études autochtones à la fin des années soixante et au début des années soixante-dix, les auteurs et intellectuels autochtones nord-américains ont continuellement demandé que nous débouchons nos oreilles et nos esprits pour commencer à écouter leurs voix (Deloria, Forbes). Or, surmonter la notion euro-centrique selon laquelle « toute connaissance méritant être connue … fut créée en Europe » semble jusqu'à ce jour être très difficile, tout comme sa conséquence, à savoir qu'avant leur colonisation les autochtones non-européens « tournaient leurs pouces en attendant les Lumières » (Episkenew). En se basant sur divers interventions autochtones, cette présentation focalisera sur diverses tentatives d'explication pour élucider l'incapacité centenaire des européens et des euro-américains d'écouter et de prendre au sérieux les philosophies autochtones et les savoirs scientifiques empiriques. Cette incapacité de pouvoir

écouter exprime non seulement l'arrogance culturelle européenne selon laquelle les acquis du siècle des Lumières ont éclipsé, une fois pour toutes, toute autre forme de connaissance scientifique, mais affecte aussi la manière dont ces connaissances sont transmises et les normes éthiques qu'elles comportent. Si, comme J. Armstrong l'exprime, « la science est l'intelligence de la nature », peu importe si cette intelligence est exprimée par « des formules scientifiques [écrits] ou par des paroles ». En poursuivant la logique d'Armstrong et en soulignant que les traditions orales autochtones enregistrent, emmagasinent et transmettent du savoir empirique centenaire et millénaire sur la meilleure manière de vivre avec la terre et toutes ses créatures, nous devons admettre qu'il faudra lire toutes les connaissances empiriques, aussi appelées « théorie à travers les histoires », de manière égale à des formules scientifiques aussi abstraites qu'un tableau périodique.

Introduction

On 21 August 2014, the German newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung* carried a small report by Swiss-Canadian author Bernadette Calonego entitled "Sanfte Wölfe" ["*Gentle Wolves*"]. In it, she reported biology professor Chris Darimont's research findings, that certain wolves inhabiting islands along the coast of British Columbia were thriving on sea food and had developed more gentle social behaviour than their more aggressive relatives on the mainland. In its last paragraph Calonego's article mentions that Aboriginal peoples in British Columbia, Canada, had known this difference between what they called "coastal wolves" and "timber wolves" for a long time, and that the Heiltsuk (Bella Bella) hunter Chester Starr had alerted professor Darimont of Simon Frazer University to this phenomenon. The article concludes: "So now the attentive observations by Indigenous people have found a scientific confirmation by Darimont's studies."[1] Calonego's report is just one example of how Western scientists are beginning to use Aboriginal knowledge, especially in the field of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK). But why is it – as her report exemplifies – that Indigenous knowledge apparently needs to be accredited by Western science?[2] Why does expert knowledge that is gained empirically by extended periods of observations of, and permanent interaction with, nature, have to be corroborated by a Western scientist's field studies?

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1 The original reads: "So haben nun aufmerksame Beobachtungen von Eingeborenen durch Darimonts Studie eine wissenschaftliche Bestätigung gefunden."

2 I use "Western" here as it is used by North American Aboriginal scholars to denote "European, European derived, Eurocentric" etc., as opposed to Indigenous. Originally, I believe, Western was used in the sense of "European" as opposed to "Oriental" (*abendländisch* v.s. *morgenländisch*). "Western" the way I use it entails the whole weight, hubris, shameful colonial legacy and continuing arrogance and complacency of European and European derived "white"/White academic traditions and claims to intellectual supremacy.

In this essay I shall try to share my thoughts about the relationships between Indigenous knowledges and Western discourse, and I shall try to find answers to three questions. Firstly, why have we as Europeans or Westerners apparently been unable to listen to and learn from Indigenous knowledges? Secondly, what is it that we seem to have failed to learn from Indigenous knowledges? Thirdly, why do Indigenous knowledges seem so vitally important to us today? In groping for answers to these questions, I am quite painfully aware of the fact that I am neither a trained philosopher nor a qualified historian, but that I approach them as one individual scholar in literary and cultural studies with a lifelong interest in Aboriginal peoples of the Americas. I am also aware that the answers to my questions are all interrelated and simultaneous. They touch upon the essential interconnectedness of Indigenous ontology, epistemologies, axiology and methodologies – an interdependence explored and emphasised persistently in Shawn Wilson's study *Research is Ceremony* (20-137) – , and the theoretical divisions implied by the three separate questions are mere abstractions to accommodate the unavoidable consecutiveness of language and the linear logic of Western discourse.

But first of all, and following a widespread Indigenous protocol, I will begin by locating myself in relation to the topic that I am trying to address.

Locating Myself

I am a German born two weeks before World War II ended in Europe, and three months after the liberation of Auschwitz – and that has influenced every day in my life. I grew up in a small formerly Danish-German border town which had doubled its population in 1945 due to the influx of refugees, displaced persons and expellees from the east. My family roots stretch along the Baltic rim from Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg and Pomerania to what was formerly East Prussia. In my childhood and youth I was exposed to the usual German romantic infatuation with "Indianer," and I developed a strong interest in Indigenous North America. After a PhD in English Literature in Tübingen (Lutz 1975), I returned to my previous preoccupation again, and I have been involved in Native American Studies and later Canadian First Nations, Métis and Inuit Studies for four decades. My research was first culturally self-reflexive, investigating which historical influences shaped our motivations and epistemological framing of "Indianer" (Lutz 1985) and trying to understand the phenomenon I came to call "Deutsche Indianertümelei" or "German Indianthusiasm" (Lutz 2015, 157-174). After that I began to read, teach and publish about Indigenous literatures and cultures. Eventually, my research interest took me to the Universities of Osnabrück, Greifswald and Szczecin, but in the process also to a number of guest professorships at Indigenous universities and departments, including a year at DQU (Deganawidah-Quetzalcoatl University) and Tecumseh Center at the University of California at Davis, a year at the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College (now: First Nations University of Canada), a year at the University of Ottawa, and a term each at

Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, and the University of Calgary in Alberta. I also enjoyed repeated research visits to the En'Owkin Center at Penticton, BC, the University of Saskatchewan (SUNTEP) in Saskatoon, the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, and several other Native Studies centres. These experiences provided me with the incredible privilege and joy to learn from Indigenous researchers, authors, editors, teachers, students and elders. Looking back at my experiences from the vantage point of a 70-year old retiree, I feel that I have been truly blessed, and I am deeply grateful.

In the process of collaborating with Indigenous colleagues I often encountered what I would call "connecting moments" in which things fell into place in such remarkable coincidences that my Western "enlightened" and rational self began, after decades of denial and doubt, to humbly and gratefully accept the notion that, indeed, things are all connected. When (re-)reading for this article a number of studies by Indigenous scholars on Indigenous epistemologies and research paradigms (Armstrong, Atleo, Deloria, Episkenew, Forbes, Kovach, Kuokkanen, McLeod, Wilson), I found that all of them seem to agree on what was so hard for me to accept, namely that reality appears as much more complexly and intricately interrelated than my materialist convictions had been able to accommodate. In Margaret Kovach's study *Indigenous Methodologies* I stumbled across a passage, which I can fully empathize with and subscribe to:

> I still do not understand these experiences fully. I have tried to analyze, theorize, and rationalize, but there are some things that you cannot deconstruct. As an Elder said, some knowledges you cannot know. What I am left with is an acceptance that these knowings matter to me inwardly, and because I allowed them they impacted my research path in a good way. (Kovach 2009, 182)

1. Why have we as Europeans or Westerners apparently been unable to listen to and learn from Indigenous knowledges?

The European inability to learn from Aboriginal American epistemologies is indeed striking, because after all, we have taken so much material wealth in what Alfred W. Crosby in 1972 called *The Columbian Exchange*. This exchange profoundly altered both the Americas and Europe, and in the process the Atlantic became a *mare internum* between its adjoining continents, or indeed a "Red Atlantic", as Jace Weaver so aptly called it quite recently (2014), thereby echoing Paul Gilroy's foundational 1993 study of the "Black Atlantic." These scholars show that Native Americans and Africans, respectively, were key players in this exchange. In their studies Weaver and Gilroy debunk euro-centrism and reveal the white supremacist hubris of earlier transatlantic histories, which had served to obliterate the achievements of non-European participants in the post-Columbian drama. While the silencing of women's

voices and Black voices has often been revealed and criticized over the past forty years, it is only more recently that scholarly attention is being turned to the decisive material and cultural input and the civilizing achievements of Indigenous peoples. Scholars like Warren Lowes (1986), Jack Weatherford (1988, 1991) and Ronald Wright (1992) have described the enormous and fundamental transfer of material wealth and agricultural practices from the Americas to Europe, which facilitated the astounding demographic and economic growth of the post-Columbian West (Lutz 2015, 142-153). Jack D. Forbes has tried to turn the tables on Columbus even more radically, in his investigation, *The American Discovery of Europe* (2007). Today, it is time to have another look at the exchange and study the transfer not only of material wealth and technologies, but also of Indigenous knowledges per se. Or rather, it is high time to begin to study the obstacles which prevented the acceptance of Indigenous ontology, epistemologies and axiology in Europe and North America, in order to overcome colonialist one-way-communication, so that, finally, we may become ready to learn from centuries and millennia of Indigenous scholarship.

For me as a then young academic, the Bavarian journalist Claus Biegert was the most influential German author to rekindle my childhood interest in Native American affairs. In 1976 he published, together with Carl-Ludwig Reichert, a translation of parts of Vine Deloria's seminal 1970 study *We Talk, You Listen*, in which the Lakota lawyer and philosopher demanded that, after centuries of one-way communication between Europeans and Native Americans, the process be reversed. For the German title of his translation Biegert chose *Nur Stämme werden überleben* [*Only Tribes Will Survive*], thus arguing for re-Indigenization as a sustainable way of life. While I have long tried to make Deloria's demand "we talk, you listen" paradigmatic for my approach to Native American Studies (Lutz 2005, 81f.), I have more recently come to re-examine and re-acknowledge Biegert's statement, realizing that his claim "only tribes will survive" is no less profound and truly prophetic, especially when read alongside with Jeannette Armstrong's doctoral dissertation, in which the Syilx Okanagan scholar argues for the re-Indigenization of all peoples, lest we perish (2009). So I took up Deloria's imperative in the title of this article, and I shall return to Biegert's prophetic statement towards the end.

1.1. Colonialism/Racism

One possible answer to the question "Why we as Europeans or Westerners have apparently been unable to listen to and learn from Indigenous knowledges" seems to reside in the fact that our relationship to Indigenous cultures is profoundly colonial – even if Austria, Germany or Switzerland never had any colonies in North America. Indeed, Germany developed a colonial mindset along with other European nations through its colonial engagements in Africa and Micronesia (the Pacific). A colonialist mindset is racist and denigrates and dehumanizes the colonial 'objects', thereby making it easier for the colonizer to abuse, exploit or even kill the subal-

terns. Thus, the colonial relationship is paradigmatic of what the Norwegian peace researcher Johan Galtung (1969) described as the subject-object relationship in personal and structural violence.[3] But racism also retards the mind of the ruler, i.e. the colonial master himself, by framing his perception into clichés, denials, and exclusions, and thus *un*-enabling him to recognize the humanity of the subaltern, the colonized object. Someone whose perception remains stunted by "Indianthusiasm," and who has learned to expect First Nations people to be *Indianer* like Winnetou, the most popular fictional "Indian" in German speaking countries, is *un*-enabled to meet Indigenous people as complex human beings. Inuit scholar Karla Jessen Williamson says much the same about "Eskimos:"

> A substantial amount of the writing about the Eskimos omitted real Inuit perspectives and was uncritically predicated upon assumptions directly stemming from Eurocentric, paternalistic, patronizing and belittling paradigms; it was, at the very least, colonialist. Furthermore, the Christian doctrine played a great role in discounting other ways of being. (2000, 127)

The colonial axiom "protects" the colonizer against acknowledging complicity, and it blocks his capacity to accept Indigenous epistemologies.

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3 I have always been surprised by, and somewhat disappointed about, how little impact the Norwegian scholar's theoretical discussion of "violence" seems to have had in English language academic discourse, even though his most fundamental article is available in that language (Galtung 1969), while his 1975 book *Är fred möjlig? Studier I fred och imperialism* was never translated into English. Galtung's very encompassing definition of violence as any situation in which a person is not allowed to develop to her fullest intellectual, psychological and physical potential has far reaching social consequences. His differentiation between personal and structural violence entails an ethics of pro-actively working to overcome, or at least mitigate, the social structures which "violate" human development, whereas his definition of personal violence clearly shows how individual "violators" are complexly implicated and "violate" their own humanity by being victimizers of others. His definitions are equally pertinent for post-colonial studies, anti-racism and anti-sexism. The German scholar Jörg Becker (1977) has taken Galtung's theories a step further by defining racism as a form of violence in the Galtungian sense, and showing how racism not only violates the victims most fundamentally but at the same time stunts and violates the racist himself in his perceptions. A corresponding extension of Galtung's definition pertinently shows that patriarchy and hetero-sexism not only violate women and those who transgress hetero-normativity but that these forms of violence also impede the victimizers' developments to their full human potentials. The most important implications of Galtung's definition remain for me the ethics to overcome any social and political systems that are based on and impose structural violence.

1.2. Christianity

It seems obvious also that monotheism, and in the European case Christianity, has a lot to answer for when it comes to our inability to learn from Indigenous knowledges. A Christian axiom claims that there is only *one* true god. Most churches seem to insist that there is only one correct way of worshipping, and that there is only one religious truth. Such hubris forecloses listening to and learning from Indigenous knowledges with an open heart and mind – otherwise, I am certain, we would have learned about more conversions going in the other direction.

1.3. Enlightenment

The Enlightenment comes to mind as another mental obstacle to our learning from Indigenous knowledges – and in saying that, I feel a bit like a traitor to the epistemological place I come from, and of the emancipatory impact the Cartesian shift entailed for Europeans. But for Aboriginal scholars, the Enlightenment's complicity in colonialism is all too clear. Jo-Ann Episkenew expressed the dubious role of "enlightenment" very poignantly in her award-winning book *Taking Back our Spirits* (2009), from which I quote:

> In my second year as an undergraduate student, I had an epiphany. I realized that all knowledge worth knowing – or more specifically, knowledge that my university considered worth teaching – was created by Greeks, appropriated by the Romans, disseminated throughout western Europe, and through colonialism made its way to the rest of the people of the world, who apparently were sitting on their thumbs waiting for enlightenment. (1)

Similarly, the Sami scholar Rauna Kuokkanen, in her immensely well researched and theorized doctoral dissertation *Reshaping the University: Responsibility, Indigenous Epistemes, and the Logic of the Gift* (2007) aims her critique at the heart of Western epistemology, i.e. the Enlightenment, when she contends

> The empiricism of the Enlightenment marked a radical break from participatory, respectful relations with the world. The Cartesian view of the world became characterized by hyperseparation as well as by the fantasy that the world can be measured. (6)

By contrast, I remember when as a high school student I first heard the Cartesian notion *Cogito, ergo sum* ["I think, therefore I am"]. I was fascinated by the existentialist radicalism of this axiom. But after four decades of learning in Indigenous Studies I am not so certain any more. *Cogito ergo sum* is a statement that is entirely isolation-

ist and shockingly solipsistic. It constructs the thinking subject as removed from any relations with the surrounding world, from time or place, from social relations and the ecosystem, and even from his or her own physical being. The *ego* ["I"] in *Cogito* ["I think"] needs no body (nobody!), no land, no emotions, no others, regardless of whether they are finned, winged, scaled, rooted, four legged or human. Would not statements like "I have a mother, therefore I am" or "I eat and defecate, therefore I am" or "I live on this place on earth, therefore I am" be equally pertinent, less egocentric and certainly more life sustaining? The exquisite Cartesian logic and rationality of the enlightenment estranges us from the physical world around us, on which Indigenous knowledges are intricately based.

1.4. Literacy vs. Orality

A fourth obstacle in our reception of Indigenous knowledges is both epistemological and methodological, contingent on modes of knowledge acquisition and dissemination. For us, literacy is a *sine qua non* [indispensable]. Western academia – and my focus here is in philology and cultural studies – privileges printed texts presenting heuristic conclusions in impersonal language, and substantiated by massive readings of secondary sources – and that is fine, and particularly important in Europe.[4] We all know that objectivity in qualitative research is a fallacy, but at least in our academic rhetoric we tend to strive for and uphold an aura of impartiality.

Indigenous epistemologies vary from nation to nation, and in recent years, there is a growing insistence that Native Studies be tribal specific. At the same time, all approaches to Indigenous knowledges conducted by Indigenous researchers which I have read so far share the methodologies and axiology of the oral traditions, which lie at the heart of Indigenous cultures. As early as 1991 Lee Maracle explained that Indigenous knowledge is "Theory Coming Through Stories" (172). Indigenous re-

4 It may be an idiosyncratic pedantry, but I do read bibliographies per se as important documents providing information about the scholarly acumen and positioning of an author. When reading fairly recent studies about Indigenous knowledges conducted and published by Indigenous researchers in North America (mostly PhD-theses), I was struck by what seemed to me to be a surprising shortness of most of their bibliographies. While this apparent dearth of published written sources was often (assumed to be, or in reality) compensated by the amount of scholars, elders, and fellow academics the researchers had consulted in the process – following an oral methodology – their bibliographies tended to be markedly shorter than those I found in comparable theses by Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers who were trained at or had submitted their theses at European universities. A comparative count of four bibliographies for each group showed that the bibliographical entries of "European"-originated or -submitted studies which I consulted eclipsed those of the North American theses at a ratio of 365 to 115. Since three of the scholars counted here under 'European PhDs' were in fact Indigenous themselves and had also widely used oral informants, the difference may perhaps be attributed to idiosyncrasies of the researchers, but seems more prominently to be related to structural differences – epistemologies, methods, and traditions – between the respective universities in North America and Europe.

searchers I read all privilege story over formula, experiences over abstract learning, and orality over literacy. These are procedures which our Western academia has a hard time recognizing, accommodating or validating, let alone accepting.[5]

2. What is it that we seem to have failed to learn from Indigenous knowledges?

Relationality, accountability and land-locked Indigeneity are complexly interconnected, but again, I will try to present them consecutively.

2.1. Relationality

One of the first phrases anybody approaching Indigenous North American cultural practices will hear is "All My Relations," a phrase that translates the Lakota "Mitakuye Oyasin," a formula by which they end their prayers, and a transcultural "amen" used by many different Indigenous individuals and nations.[6] It expresses "a tribal sense of relation to all being" (Lincoln 2), which seems central to Indigenous epistemology and axiology. In his 1973 study *God Is Red*, Lakota scholar Vine Deloria says that even the "possibility of conceiving of an individual alone in a tribal religious sense is ridiculous" and would constitute a "terrifying loss of identity" (Deloria 201). More recently, Nuu-chah-nulth scholar Umeek or Richard Atleo explained that in "the Nuu-chah-nulth worldview it is unnatural, and equivalent to death and destruction, for any person to be isolated from family or community" (Atleo 2004, 27).[7]

5 I do not want to bash Western academia here. I think that our system of documenting evidence is pertinent and well grounded. Detailed bibliographies not only document the acumen of the researchers' learnedness based on reading, but they also acknowledge and honor, name by name, the acumen and reading of those who went before her or him. A good bibliography gives the lineage of the scholar's learning. While Indigenous research protocol generally puts the self-locationing of the speaker in relation to her/his sources (dreams, elders, talking circles, visions) at the beginning, Western academic conventions put the "genealogy" of research (readings) at the end. Both explain and demarcate where the scholar and the study come from, and they acknowledge relationships, each contextualizing their referential universe. While some Indigenous studies I have read lack in the Western form of bibliographic contextualization – see footnote 3, above – nearly all Western studies I know, lack in the Indigenous form of personal contextualization, almost obliterating the researcher's ideological whereabouts and ethics, and lacking axiological accountability.

6 There are various spellings of this well-known Lakota phrase. I take this spelling from Kenneth Lincoln in his *Native American Renaissance*, 2, and from a chapter heading in Kenneth Lincoln's and Al Logan Slagle's *The Good Red Road*, 247.

7 To demonstrate the interrelatedness and mutual dependency of all creatures on earth, Jack D. Forbes once explained the human dependence on the ecosystem by comparing humans and trees, and how they are related. Trees have roots that go into the soil, which is composed of the dead bodies of "all our relations", i.e. all organisms that went before us. Humans, like trees, have roots, too, but ours do not go into the earth through our feet, but into the air through our nostrils and mouths. The air holds the oxygen produced by trees and other plants. Our mouths take in food. The earth holds the bones, composted flesh and feces, which nourish the trees. No mat-

Individualism and egocentrism run counter to the relational worldview by which Aboriginal people traditionally locate themselves in relation to and as part of all of creation, not as masters of nature but as members of it, on equal terms with all other forms of life, all of whom must and do network together to sustain life on earth. Goodness invests in sustaining life, evil in its destruction. A transcultural Indigenous episteme based on sharing and collectivity perceives the individual not as self-perpetuating individual per se, not as *Cogito ergo sum*, but as constituted by an infinite web of spatial, physical, social, psychological, spiritual and mental relations, without which the individual could not and indeed, does not exist. Cree scholar Shawn Wilson contends that Indigenous research "is the knowing and respectful reinforcement that all things are related and connected" (2008, 61). He explains later:

> An Indigenous paradigm comes from the foundational belief that knowledge is relational. Knowledge is shared with all of creation. It is not just interpersonal relationships, not just with the research subjects I may be working with, but it is a relationship with all of creation. It is with the cosmos, it is with the animals, with the plants, with the earth that we share this knowledge. […] Who cares about those ontologies? It's not the realities in and of themselves that are important; it is the relationship that I share with reality. (Wilson 2008, 73-74)

In such a context, *Cogito ergo sum* sounds ridiculous or even lethal.

Relatedness extends into all realms of human and non-human existence. In the material it is manifest in what Sami scholar Rauna Kuokkanen explained in detail as "the gift economy" (2007, 23-24). Atleo describes giving as "a general community practice," and as an "economically feasible principle" (2004, 39). A gift economy cherishes giving as much as receiving, not in the sense of bartering or exchange, because a gift expecting a return is not a present given but a trade, but giving as an essential mode of interaction. It seems modelled on the boundless generosity of Mother Earth herself, who has nourished and supported us all (and our relations) since life began. Mother Earth continues to give, even while being exploited and raped increasingly by rampant capitalism and the neoliberal race for the global availability of resources for those fewer and fewer who can afford to pay for them. A system based on the maxim of *Consumo, ergo sum* ["I consume, therefore I am"] is diametrically opposed to Indigenous axiology. In a gift economy, a recipient who has learned to accept gifts in a respectful and unselfish way will "think with the heart" and will also give of herself, while gratefully respecting the source and net of

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ter how powerful we may consider ourselves vis-à-vis nature, if our nose-and-mouth roots are cut or sealed shut, we die like a tree dies when its roots are severed from the soil (personal recollection).

relations that make all gifts possible. This has far-reaching social, psychological, economic, and above all ecological implications.

2.2. Accountability

Another fundamental principle of Indigenous epistemology and axiology seems to be accountability. It is connected to relationality and orality, and also contingent on the land-relatedness, discussed hereafter. Wilson states that in his understanding "[a]n Indigenous research paradigm is relational and maintains relational accountability" (2008, 71). More so than in literate cultures, where lies, plagiarisms, misquotations or other frauds can be uncovered and exposed by objective and impersonal research, the recipients of knowledge in oral cultures have to depend on the wisdom and personal integrity of the ones who provide information, the more so because oral stories and knowledges live and die with their keepers. They are not preserved in libraries and archives, but are always only "one generation from extinction" (Johnston 1990, 10). Each speaker is responsible for the truthfulness and the lasting effects of her own words, which, once she has spoken, she cannot call back, burn or send through the shredder. The speaker is accountable to the past and the coming generations in what the Cree storyteller and knowledge keeper Alexander Wolfe called "a copyright system based on trust" (1988, xiv). Thus, orality needs and does have an inbuilt ethics that I would like to call "Wahrhaftigkeit" in German, because: "Der Sprecher haftet für die Wahrheit seiner Worte" – the speaker is liable for the truth of his words – and that truth clings to and is attached to the speaker's life and honour. Cree scholar Margaret Kovach puts it like this: "It is about standing behind one's words and recognizing collective protocol, that one is accountable for one's words" (2009, 148).

In Western academia, we traditionally shirk personal exposure (and accountability), and we try to hide idiosyncrasies and experiential subjectivity by feigning objectivity and using "neutral" language. Fortunately, this denial of individual experience has gradually changed since feminist scholars demanded to expose the political in the personal, and the personal in the political, thus validating subjectivity, experiential learning and the emotional. Nevertheless, "to think with the heart", as Indigenous elders and scholars have often encouraged me to do, is not usually understood or accepted as a workable modus operandi in competitive Western academia, but often misunderstood and interpreted as a weakness, of which others can – and often would – take advantage. In the many speeches by Aboriginal orators I have listened to, and in the Indigenous research studies I have read, the speakers or writers usually begin by locating themselves, not to self-indulge or draw attention to their own persons, but to give credit to the participants in the web of their learning processes.

2.3. Land-embedded Indigeneity

Inuit scholar Karla Jessen Williamson writes about the Inuit relationship to *nuna*, the land:

> On our land we found peace, contentment, and a good life. Obviously, this can only be gained by a deep understanding of the reciprocal relationship with the land and its riches. For us the land is a soul enriching totality, which by its own integrity has allowed human existence. The allowing of life on *nuna* is premised by a strong sense of affinity with all other beings. A relationship with the land, the animals, and their souls has assured the Inuit a sustainable way of life over the last four or five millennia. This relationship has given us a strong sense of identity, one solidly bonded with the land. The sense of belonging to the land of our birth remains remarkably significant and very few Inuit have contested this by moving away from their place of birth. (2000, 127-128)

Indigenous scholars seem to agree that belonging to specific places in the land constitutes the most important paradigm of Indigenous ethnic identity. It is by their millennial trans-generational collective relationship with the land – something we do not have in Europe, due to almost incessant warfare and ethnic cleansings – and because of their observance of the obligations, which that relationship entails, that Indigenous scholars and elders tend to explain an Indigenous episteme (Armstrong, Kuokkanen).[8] While Indigenous relationships to the land are complexly diverse, they are at the same time tribal specific to a paradigmatic degree.

As stated earlier, contemporary Indigenous researchers often follow a cultural nationalist agenda by refraining from "pan-Indianism" and focussing on specific cultures and nations in their research. However, when facing Western ontology and epistemologies it seems apt to also generalize certain aspects of Indigenous worldviews and ethics vis-à-vis the European and Western worldviews and knowledge systems. With that caveat in mind, let me generalize just what I mean by "land-embedded Indigeneity". It seems to me that all Indigenous creation stories stress geographic relationality to specific places and regions, while also stressing life's dependence on the land and its ecosystem, and the human accountability such dependence entails. Perhaps the internationally best-known example would be the Haudenosaunee creation myth of Sky Woman's fall towards the waters below and the efforts by all other creatures to create some ground for her to live on, which

8 I have grappled with and tried to fathom this profound relationship, especially with regards to place, language, nationality and literature, again and again over the past decade (Lutz 2007, 2011, 2015, 105-153), and I am still pondering the issue and learning about it on a daily basis, while living in the country at the outskirts of a tiny village in North Eastern Germany, surrounded by agriculture and a historically determined landscape full of wildlife and stories.

resulted in Muskrat's earth-diving sacrifice and the creation of Turtle Island, i.e. North America – a narration which is also echoed in the creation myths of nations neighbouring the Iroquois confederacy.[9] Similarly well known may be the West Coast tradition "How Raven Stole the Light."[10] Less well known is the Syilx-Okanagan story of "How Food Was Given," a traditional *captikʷɬ* [story] on which the Okanagan scholar Jeannette Armstrong focuses much of her doctoral thesis.[11] All of these creation stories maintain that those processes, which facilitated the beginnings of human life on earth, are not singular acts by an omnipotent creator, but rather the outcomes of collective processes of interdependent actions by a network of organisms/agents learning from experiences of interacting with their land. Or, to put it in a more abstract Western format, humans cannot exist in opposition to, or as masters of nature, but only as integral parts of it. It follows, therefore, that all humans are obliged to keep the ecosystem intact.

An abstract rendering of how life originated on earth is also found in Inuit traditional knowledge:

> Rather than believing in human-like gods, we believe in non-identifiable forces that create life and life-forms. The word *pinngortitaq* [the earth, H.L.] suggests that creative life forces came together. The fact that these forces became integrated may be coincidental, but each of these forces is life ordaining and in combination the creative possibilities are enormous. We believe that all beings in this world are manifestations of these integrating, life-ordaining forces, and each one of them is to be respected for its own engagement of these forces. They deserve to be recognized for their distinct, mystic quality ordained by the life-forces. (Williamson 2000, 130-131)

In their relatedness to the land and in their coming together, the life-forces Williamson writes about here appear strongly reminiscent of what Armstrong describes

9 There are many versions of this tradition. For two versions published in English by members of the Haudenosaunee confederacy see a Seneca version originally told by Jesse J. Cornplanter in 1938, "Legend of the Sky Woman, A Creation Myth," (Tehanetorens 9-14), or a Mohawk version told with his own pictographs by Tehanetorens – and with beautiful illustrations by Kahonhes (John Fadden) – in 1976, "The Creation," (15-22). For a discussion of a vernacular version by the Delaware scholar, playwright and poet Daniel David Moses, comparing it to Genesis, see Lutz (2014, 156-161).

10 For a Nuu-chah-nulth version told and interpreted by the Nuu-chah-nulth scholar Richard Atleo (Umeek) see "How Son of Raven Captured the Day" (2004, 6-10).

11 Jeannette Armstrong's dissertation is available online from the library of the University of Greifswald. An official bilingual English and Okanagan version of the foundational story "How Food Was Given" was published by the Okanagan Tribal Council (2004). Two years later Jeannette Armstrong told it in English at a conference in Greifswald, and it is now available in the conference proceedings (Lutz 2007, 31-32) as well as in Lutz (2015, 148-149).

as *tmixʷ*, "the life force of the land," in the Syilx Okanagan tradition (Armstrong 2007, 30).

Jeannette Armstrong once said that her father told her that the land is a teacher, and she explained in individual essays as well as in her doctoral dissertation how her Syilx Okanagan people, during millennia of living and flourishing in the same region, developed a vast and comprehensive, yet nuanced and detailed understanding of their regional history and ecosystem. This empirical knowledge, she explained, came to constitute their very being as an Indigenous people. The land-gained knowledge was transmitted from generation to generation through songs, rituals, and stories. It must be considered at least on par with any scientific ecological knowledge gained by Western empiricism and expressed in scientific formula. Her dissertation shows how traditional stories, *captikʷɬ*, entail and convey environmental knowledge and ethics that ensure survival, and constitute and determine Syilx Okanagan ethnicity. If Western science ever matures to learn from Indigenous epistemes, academia will have to respect and utilize Aboriginal stories and rituals on a par with the periodic table, because both *captikʷɬ* and the periodic table convey the same complexity identified as "nature's intelligence" by Armstrong:

> Science is the human ability to observe, understand and explain nature. Whether through the use of microscope, quantum or abstract theory, the fact remains that science is nature's intelligence being translated into the human mind. Organizing what appears as chaos into cognizant patterns is no less critical to human intelligence whether through scientific formulae or through words. The fundamental difference between the two as method is that words constructed into story provide open access to societal members through intellectual and emotional intelligence while access to science is limited to those schooled in its language. (Armstrong 2009, 330-331)

But land is not only a teacher to help us understand the ecosystem. Land is also an episteme for learning, structuring, and understanding history. Colin Calloway, in the prologue of his ground-breaking history of the Native American West before Lewis and Clark, *One Vast Winter Count*, states "[m]ythic tales linked to specific places contained morals and teachings that enabled people to live as true human beings" (2003, 7). Specific mountains, lakes or rocks provide mnemonic formations, inscribed by experiences and events as Bakhtinian chronotopes (Basso, 62) and palimpsests (Lutz 2015, 107-120), which constitute Indigenous historiography in a non-linear but place-related structure. Rather than plotting history chronologically as a retrospective teleology, Indigenous cultures tend to see history as structured within

a network of relations tied to places, as non-Indigenous researchers like Basso, Calloway, and Nabokov (2002, 126-149) show in their studies.[12]

3. Why are Indigenous knowledges of paramount importance to us today?

Since first contact there have been offers by Indigenous people to teach the newcomers their ways. Almost a 100 years ago, Hiamovi, High Chief of the Tsistsistas and Dakota peoples, wrote in his foreword to Natalie Curtis' monumental *The Indian's Book*: "I want all Indians and white men to read and learn how the Indians lived and thought in the olden time" (ix). And eleven years later the Lakota actor, author and educator Luther Standing Bear wrote in an often-quoted passage:

> Our annals, all happenings of human import, were stored in our song and dance rituals, our history differing in that it was not stored in books, but in the living memory. So, while the white people had much to teach us, we had much to teach them, and what a school could have been established upon that idea! (Standing Bear 1978, 236)

In the 1920s Deskaheh, the highest official of the Haudenosaune, tried in vain to address the League of Nations in Geneva about his confederacy's grievances with the British Crown and Canada (Weaver 2014, 182-188), and since then there have been a series of interventions by Mohawk and other Iroquois, as well as Hopi knowledge keepers, to warn the Western world against its self-destructive abuses of Mother Earth. Repeatedly, Indigenous scholars and elders have tried to enter the dominant discourse in Europe to share what they had acquired and stored for mil-

12 I have written about this elsewhere (Lutz 2015, 118), but let me just share with you one example, where I came to perceive history in a totally different way, while learning from an Indigenous scholar. We tend to say "we see the future before us" and "leave the past behind." Then my colleague, the Nez Percé linguist and historian Dennis Runnels, saw this as a heuristic fallacy, when he said in a personal conversation at Dartmouth College in the fall of 2001:
Europeans believe in progress. You say you leave the past behind, you see the future and you move on into the future. In our understanding that's a fallacy. The past is not behind! The past is right before us, right under us. We stand on the bones of our ancestors, on the bodies of plants and animals that went before. Even the buildings we see right in front of us are from the past. Everything we see is history. It is from the past. It's right there in front of us. But: the future? The future is behind our backs, unseen. So, we don't believe the past is behind us, and the future before us. Quite to the contrary, the past is right before us. Everything, all the history, is in the land (Runnels 2001).
Often our daily language contains knowledge, which we may not even be aware of when using it. Such seems the case when in English we say "history takes place" (and not time), or likewise in German, when we say "*ein Ereignis findet statt*" [an event takes place] – in both cases, the languages on the lexicological level seem to insist on a semantic that events are *located* at a geographical space, not at an abstract point in time. That perception literally puts history "in its place."

lennia, but we never listened. Jack D. Forbes published his study of the whiteman's greedy and disastrous exploitation of our globe, *The Wétiko-Disease*, in 1981 – deliberately in Europe, a decade before the study came out in book form in the U.S.A. in 1992.[13] In the 1970s pan-Indigenous delegations repeatedly visited Europe to talk to the United Nations in Geneva and local NGOs to protest resource extraction on Indigenous lands and the increasing destruction of our planet. [14]

When Biegert and Reichert entitled their translation of Deloria's *We Talk, You Listen* in German *Nur Stämme werden überleben*, their title expressed a realization that seems evident to Indigenous people and others who are concerned about the lethal vulnerability of our ecosystem, and who know that we are accountable for taking care of *all* its relations. This is a question of an epistemological change to effect a root-going (meaning radical) shift in our entire political and economic system, implementing an axiology and ethics that is fundamentally opposed to our linear progress of "more and more today (and to hell with tomorrow!)." Jeannette Armstrong concludes her doctoral dissertation by stating that to halt and heal the further destruction of *all* our lives, we need to re-indigenize – but be it noted that her definition of Indigeneity is based on learning and place, not race! Armstrong says about the role of Indigenous scholars:

> Clearly, necessary towards re-Indigenization is the need for Indigenous scholars to contribute the level of quality research and dialogue required to reconstruct into contemporary context the underlying precepts of Indigeneity which foster strong environmental ethics common

13 Jack D. Forbes' study, *A World Ruled by Cannibals: The Wétiko Disease of Aggression, Violence, and Imperialism,* has an unusual transatlantic publishing history. The manuscript was first produced in a "DQU Pre-Print Series" (Davis, CA.: D-Q University Press, 1979), which my students and I used for our translation. The German version then came out in 1981 under the title *Die Wétiko-Seuche: Eine indianische Philosophie von Aggression und Gewalt* (Wuppertal: Peter Hammer Verlag 1981; title transl.: "The Wetiko-Epidemic: An Indian Philosophy on Aggression and Violence"), and was reprinted in 1984. When Jack Forbes re-edited his manuscript for the Columbus centenary, Dr. Uwe Zagratzki, a former Osnabrück student and participant in the original group of translators, re-edited the translation, and this new version came out as *Columbus und andere Kannibalen: Die indianische Sicht der Dinge* (Wuppertal: Peter Hammer, 1992: title transl.: "Columbus and Other Cannibals: The Indian View of Things"), and it was only then that the first book publication in English appeared in the United States: *Columbus and Other Cannibals: The Wétiko-Disease of Exploitation, Imperialism and Terrorism* (Brooklyn, NY: Autonomedia, 1992).

14 It is impossible here to list all these initiatives by Indigenous speakers and delegates to Europe. As exemplary, I would like to refer you to *A Basic Call to Consciousness*, first published in Geneva, Switzerland in 1977 with illustrations by Kahonhes, then copyrighted 1978 and often reprinted by *Akwesasne Notes*, its third (revised) printing showing a photograph of Philip Deere (Muskogee Creek, AIM spiritual leader), Hopi elder David Mononghye, and the Haudenosaunee Tadodaho walking in front of the Indigenous delegation, holding the Hopi elder by the hands. There was regular reporting on such delegations and issues by the "Gesellschaft für bedrohte Völker/Survival International" in their journal *Pogrom*, and among German journalists it was, again, Claus Biegert who reported most persistently on these issues.

> to Indigenous peoples and now largely absent in non-Indigenous society. (2009, 323)

To me, this statement echoes what Hiamovi, Luther Standing Bear, Vine Deloria and Claus Biegert, Jack Forbes and many others have said repeatedly throughout the last century. It also underlines and corroborates the importance of what contemporary scholars like Armstrong, Atleo, Episkenew, Kovach, Kuokkanen, Wilson and others have stated in far greater theoretical detail, namely that the western world is in dire need of Indigenous knowledges in order to survive.[15] While such re-Indigenization as an episteme may be the only chance we have to survive, this does not mean that we should return to the Stone Age. Rather, we have to address in a more complexly encompassing and relationally accountable way our own givens here and now, to develop an ethics and an axiology of survival. In this process, I believe, Indigenous knowledges provide a guiding paradigm.

Nowhere in the world does the dire need to heed Indigenous knowledge seem more obvious and more important than in the Arctic, where climate change is wreaking such havoc. Mary Simon, director of Tapriirisat Kanatami, called Arctic Inuit people "the 'canary in the mineshaft' with respect to the regionalized impact of global climate change" (2011, 884). She explains:

> We have the vocation to be the frontline environmental watchdogs and police. This does not make us hostile to new forms of development or locked into a kind of paralyzing nostalgia for the days of old. It does, however, make us a critical force in ensuring that the development of

15 Now, nothing that I have said here is new to scholars in Indigenous Studies. In her pioneering book on Aboriginal Literatures from a German immigrant Canadian perspective, *Travelling Knowledges,* the late Renate Eigenbrod clearly marked that we need a new epistemology and ethics when approaching Indigenous literature, and by extension, I would conclude that a radically altered ethics is needed if we are to survive on this planet together. But given the fact that Christian axiology in its 2000-year effort has failed so abysmally to make way for goodness, I am not too optimistic, but I know that the ethics and epistemology of re-Indigenization are direly needed to unsettle the globalized rampage of unleashed capitalist greed. In my conclusion to Jack Forbes' *Columbus und andere Kannibalen*, I wrote more than twenty years ago – and there is nothing new I can add:
The cannibalism of Western-Christian culture is expressed merely in symbolic terms in wine and bread turning into the flesh and blood of Christ. But whoever has witnessed the gaping wounds and cancerous growths on our Mother Earth, does see in concrete terms how right Jack Forbes is in his challenge that we are greedily consuming life itself in a cannibalistic manner. But the fact that he decided to rewrite and republish the book once again for us Europeans in 1992, five hundred years after the Columbian Exchange began, is evidence of the fact of his and other Indigenous people's hope to find allies in Europe, because it depends on all of us whether racism, fascism, sexism and ecological insanity will continue to spread, or whether we will succeed in leaving the straight road of our linear "progress" towards death and re-enter the circle to which we all belong, and which is called 'life' (179; translation H.L.).

> Arctic resources is done in ways that are measured, informed, transparent, and accountable, and that make the wellbeing and cultural continuity of Inuit necessary and central considerations. (2011, 889-890)

The signs read by Inuit knowledge keepers as "environmental watchdogs and police" are indeed more than alarming, and the messages provided by Indigenous experts are precise and articulate, yet hard for Western science to accept. Focusing on Inuit epistemology, Kerstin Knopf explored in a recent article how even TEK (Traditional Ecological Knowledge) is still often dismissed by non-Indigenous academia, and with her permission I take my last example from her paper.

The Inuit film-maker Zacharias Kunuk is best known for his ground-breaking all-Inuktitut feature epic *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner* (2002), but eight years later he released a documentary together with Ian Mauro, *Qapirangajuq: Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change* (2010), based on extensive interviews with Inuit elders sharing their observations of fundamental changes in their arctic homelands. Based on their own truly empirical lifelong day-to-day observations, for example, they reported that the Arctic appears out of kilter, because according to their astute observations today the sun rises in a place different from where it rose when the elders were children. Now, Western science had a hard time accommodating that knowledge, let alone accepting it as valid, because NASA contends that there is no shift in the earth's axis that could explain such a fundamental dislocation. Ian Mauro, Kunuk's non-Inuit scientist collaborator, has suggested that changes in the directions of ice and water flows in the Arctic may affect the reflection of light and thus account for the change in perception. Today, the jury is still out on what causes the sun to rise and set in a different place (cf. Knopf, "Indigenizing Science?!").

Maybe we really are beginning to listen after all. The 2014 Canadian Studies conference at Grainau, Bavaria, focused on "Indigenous Knowledges and Academic Discourse." It shows that we are attempting to do what Tatanka Yotanka (aka Sitting Bull) suggested more than a century ago: "Let us put our minds together, and see what life we can make for our children."

An Afterthought

It may seem almost a paradox, but a more complex understanding of, and a greater affinity with, Indigenous knowledge systems, may not come from cultural studies or other "soft" sciences first, but from the most hard-core scientific discipline Western academia has to offer: quantum physics.[16] Without being scholarly equipped, unfortunately, to go into greater scientific detail, I would like to point to what appears to me a striking congruity on the iconographic level, between two epistemological frames or metaphors to capture the relational interconnectedness

16 This is a connection Richard Atleo already pointed to in *Principles of Tsawalk* (2011, 37).

of life's phenomena. The first is from the doctoral dissertation of a Cree scholar in education, the second from a German physicist.

Aboriginal scholar Shawn Wilson describes how in a dream he came to experience and visualize the interconnectedness of himself with all of creation, by perceiving in a surrounding darkness just one spot of light, and then very slowly discovering another spot of light, and then another, and another, and consecutively an ever expanding amount of more and more individual knots of light, which all became connected by a filament of shining threads of light between all these knots, creating an ever expanding and ever accelerating growing web of relations and all-connectedness. He continues:

> Now as you open your eyes, you can see all of the things that are around you. What you see is their physical form, but you realize that their physical form is really just a web of relationships that have taken on a familiar shape. Every individual thing that you see around you is really just a huge knot – a point where thousands and millions of relationships come together. These relationships come to you from the past, from the present and from the future. This is what surrounds us, and what forms us, our world, our cosmos, our reality. We could not be without being in relationship with everything that surrounds us and is within us. Our reality, our ontology is the relationships. (Wilson 2008, 76)

The late German physicist Hans Peter Dürr published in 2012 a collection of essays under the title *Physik und Transparenz: Die großen Physiker unserer Zeit über Begegnungen mit dem Wunderbaren* [*Physics and Transparence: The Great Physicists of our Time about their Encounters with the Wondrous*], with contributions by some leading 20th century physicists including Niels Bohr, Max Planck, and Werner Heisenberg. In his preface to the 2012 republication of the collection Dürr recounts the development of quantum physics after Niels Bohr and he reads Heisenberg's *Kopenhagener Interpretation* as marking a radical departure from traditional physics and an opening of the discipline to epistemologies far beyond the material. He also visualizes reality as constituted by a web of relations:

> Anstelle einer primär unverbundenen materiell-mechanistischen Ausgangsbasis, der alles Übrige wie Form und Bewegung an zweiter Stelle folgt, tritt nun ein immaterielles, unauftrennbares Beziehungsgefüge an die vorderste Position, mit den uns geläufigen Eigenschaften wie Materie und Energie als sekundäre Erscheinungen. (9)
> [Instead of a separate and primary base that is material and mechanistic, and to which all other properties like form and movement are contingent and secondary, there is now a non-material, inseparable web of re-

> lations as primary, to which such familiar properties as matter and energy are secondary phenomena. transl. H.L.]

Such an approach, it seems to me, would accommodate Indigenous epistemologies, methods and possibly also axiologies, and it came as no surprise to me when I found that Dürr's metaphor to explain his model for this "Beziehungsgefüge" [relational web] closely resembles that which Wilson saw in his dream.

> Wenn wir uns den Geist als Beziehungsgeflecht von Fäden vorstellen, so ergeben dessen Knotenpunkte eine Art räumliche Bündelungen wie bei einem Fischernetz oder Pullover. Doch das sind alles nur Gleichnisse, die uns helfen, in unseren Vorstellungen näher an das Unbegreifliche heranzukommen. Wir dürfen sie nicht als Erklärungen für ein beweisbares Verständnis missbrauchen. (10)
> [If we visualize the spirit as a relational web of threads, then its knots will constitute a form of spatial ties as in a fishing net or sweater. But these are simply metaphors which may help us to get nearer the unfathomable. We must not misapply them as explanations for an understanding that can be proved. transl. H.L.]

Please do not get me wrong. I am not quoting Dürr to endorse Indigenous knowledges. Far from it. They do not need that. Yet, this is an instance where Western and Indigenous knowledges seem to come closer in their interpretation of our surroundings. And in the light of such epistemological parallels, I would like to express my hope that Western scientists, who are studying nature's intelligence, just like those Inuit elders in Kunuk's documentary, may discover windows which open vistas towards relationality, accountability and re-Indigenization.

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Şükran Tipi

Documenter le patrimoine culturel et linguistique à travers un inventaire de savoirs toponymiques en langue autochtone:

Expériences de recherche collaborative chez les Pekuakamiulnuatsh du Lac Saint-Jean, Québec[1]

Abstract

The Pekuakamiulnuatsh, Innu First Nation of Mashteuiatsh, located at Lake Saint-John (Quebec), has initiated a multidisciplinary research project in 2009, based on a decolonizing approach of equal partnership and aiming at the documentation of their Indigenous knowledge related to the territories their ancestors lived, travelled and hunted on. These toponyms in the Innu language, very descriptive as all languages of the Algonquian family, attest to the close relation of its speakers to their land and are illustrative of the material and spiritual role places played and still play. This is why the Pekuakamiulnuatsh consider them to be, still today in a context of language loss and ongoing globalization, crucial bearers of cultural and linguistic knowledge that has to be documented and preserved, as their common heritage to pass on to future generations. This communication will present the ongoing research project directed by the First Nation of Mashteuiatsh and its particular political, linguistic and methodological context and will focus, in a second step, on the analysis from an anthropological perspective, of the inextricable link between toponymy, Indigenous linguistic and cultural knowledge and the ancestral territories, a link that is fundamental to the understanding of the relevance and urgency of local initiatives like the one presented in the following article.

Résumé

La Première Nation des Pekukamiulnuatsh, localisée à Mashteuiatsh, sur les rives du Lac Saint-Jean au Québec, a entamé en 2009 un projet de recherche multidisciplinaire visant à documenter l'histoire de l'utilisation et de l'occupation de leur territoire ancestral, entre autres à travers les toponymes et les savoirs linguistiques et culturels qui s'y

1 L'auteure a collaboré comme linguiste au projet de recherche présenté dans cette contribution et est récipiendaire d'une Bourse d'études supérieures Joseph-Armand-Bombardier du Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada (2013-2016).

rattachent. Témoins de la relation que ce groupe autochtone, à l'instar de plusieurs nations algonquiennes de tradition nomade ou semi-nomade, entretenait avec son territoire ancestral, les toponymes en langue innue s'avèrent encore aujourd'hui, dans un contexte postcolonial fortement mondialisé, d'une importance fondamentale. Ils sont chargés du patrimoine culturel et linguistique que les Pekuakamiulnuatsh souhaitent documenter et transmettre aux générations futures. Cette contribution portera sur ce projet de recherche local qui s'inscrit dans une démarche de décolonisation des savoirs en ce qui concerne, du côté autochtone, la création d'alliances universitaires et institutionnelles. Elle donnera également un aperçu anthropologique du lien indissociable entre toponymie, savoirs de tradition orale et territoire chez les Innus de Mashteuiatsh.

Introduction

À l'exemple d'autres Premières Nations du Canada, la Première Nation des *Pekuakamiulnuatsh*[2] fait face à de nombreux défis reliés à la prise en charge progressive des dossiers qui les concernent, que ce soit dans le domaine politique ou dans celui de la cogestion des ressources naturelles, par exemple. Les instances gouvernementales et les entreprises sont certes dans l'obligation légale de consulter les peuples autochtones en vertu de l'article 35 de la *Loi constitutionnelle de 1982*[3]. Mais force est de constater que les mécanismes de consultation mis en place sont inadaptés aux besoins exprimés localement et qu'ils ne sont souvent pas enclenchés en amont des projets de développement. Ces consultations demandent aux premiers occupants du territoire de fournir des informations précises sur leur occupation dans un secteur défini et d'amener des preuves de leur présence allant souvent jusqu'avant la Conquête ou avant la période dite de Contact. Ainsi, comme les délais de réponse dans le cadre de ces processus de consultation sont en plus généralement très courts, les personnes-ressources sollicitées dans les communautés autochtones se trouvent toujours dans la position de devoir réagir au lieu de pouvoir agir activement en tant que parti concerné.

Cette contribution présentera les démarches entreprises par la communauté de Mashteuiatsh pour documenter les savoirs et pratiques traditionnels reliés à l'occupation et l'utilisation de leur territoire ancestral, ainsi que des réflexions théoriques qui sous-tendent ces efforts. Nous débuterons par une présentation des contextes historique, politique et linguistique dans lesquels il faut situer cette prise en charge en matière de recherche pour en comprendre la pertinence actuelle.

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2 Innus du Lac-Saint-Jean (*Pekuakami* = toponyme innu pour le Lac Saint-Jean ; pour *Ilnuatsh*, voir page suivante).

3 http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/fra/const/page-16.html#docCont.

Après une description du projet de recherche en cours dans la communauté, nous explorerons, d'une perspective anthropologique, le lien indissociable affirmé par les Pekuakamiulnuatsh encore aujourd'hui entre le patrimoine toponymique et linguistique, et leur territoire ancestral.

Histoire et situation actuelle des Pekuakamiulnuatsh

À l'époque préhistorique déjà, les « *Kak8chaKs* » (Kakouchaks, nom dérivé de *Kak*ᵘ = porc-épic) habitaient le territoire du Saguenay – Lac-Saint-Jean. Ces gens, ancêtres des Pekuakamiulnuatsh actuels (« Montagnais/*Ilnuatsh*[4] du Lac-Saint-Jean), tiennent leur appellation du « *Pekuakami* », nom *ilnu* du lac Saint-Jean, qui servait depuis des millénaires comme lieu de rassemblements et d'échanges entre plusieurs groupes d'Amérindiens. C'est plus particulièrement à l'embouchure de la rivière Métabetchouane, tributaire de ce lac, que se tenaient ces « foires », ce qui nous est confirmé par les Relations des Jésuites, les premiers explorateurs de ce pays. La nation des Montagnais/Ilnuatsh, qui étaient également appelés « Montagnards » et dont faisait partie la bande des Kakouchaks, a été ainsi nommée par les premiers Français arrivés en Nouvelle-France pour bien signifier que ces « Indiens » vivaient dans les montagnes laurentiennes de la rive nord du fleuve Saint-Laurent (Girard/Perron 1995). Le territoire alors connu de cette nation était vaste : sur la rive nord, il s'étendait de la rivière aux Outardes jusqu'à Québec en passant par le Saguenay et le lac Saint-Jean. Dans cette région, c'est Tadoussac qui semble avoir été un lieu privilégié de rassemblement et de contact avec les Européens. Sur la rive sud, ils occupaient, au XVIIᵉ siècle à tout le moins, un territoire délimité par les rivières du Loup et Matane, soit une partie du Bas-Saint-Laurent (Parent 1985, Girard/Perron 1995).

C'est à partir de l'ouverture de la région à la propriété privée, à l'agriculture et à la coupe du bois dès les années 1840 que les Innus du Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean et de la Haute Côte-Nord, voyant leur « souveraineté usurpée » commencent à protester contre le fait que leurs terres ancestrales soient vendues sans leur accord (Girard 2004, 13). Constatant l'empiètement progressif sur les terres et donc sur leurs possibilités de déplacement, les Innus rédigent plusieurs requêtes et pétitions entre 1844 et 1851. Ils demandent d'abord des terres et ensuite de l'argent pour la subsistance et même des semences et des instruments aratoires, réalisant que l'accès à l'intérieur des terres pour la chasse traditionnelle aux fins de subsistance devient de plus

4 Sans entrer dans des détails linguistiques ni dans les discussions autour de la question, il convient de résumer ici que la langue innue comporte certaines différences dialectales, dont une consiste à utiliser le phonème *l* à la place du *n* dans certains contextes : Mashteuiatsh possède ainsi un dialecte en *l*, ce qui fait que l'appellation Innu devient *Ilnu* (signifiant 'véritable humain') et *Ilnuatsh* au pluriel. D'ailleurs, Innu et son adjectif étant des formes francisées, elles peuvent être accordées en genre et en nombre, contrairement aux formes locales, qui seront indiquées en italiques à leur première utilisation.

en plus difficile. C'est d'ailleurs le Protêt de 1851 qui peut être considéré comme premier document de revendication traditionnelle. Ayant le désir d'officialiser leur démarche visant à empêcher le gouvernement du Canada-Uni de vendre leurs terres ancestrales, les Innus se servent d'un notaire pour assurer la portée juridique de leur requête qui repose avant tout sur l'affirmation de ne jamais avoir été conquis (Girard 2004, 14).

Dans la suite de l'histoire du rapport entre les Innus et leurs terres, ces protestations auront mené à la mise en place du système des réserves (les réserves innues sont créées entre 1856 et 1963) et de la Loi sur les Indiens de 1876, mettant définitivement sous tutelle les Autochtones et leurs terres. On peut alors postuler que le besoin de terres dans le cadre de la colonisation a eu priorité sur les énoncés des droits des Innus – jamais cédés – qui découlent de la Proclamation royale de 1763, obligeant la Couronne britannique en principe à s'entendre avec les Autochtones avant de procéder à toute forme de vente de leurs terres à des particuliers.

En 1982, la Constitution canadienne a confirmé les droits ancestraux des peuples autochtones au Canada et le gouvernement du Québec a reconnu sur son territoire l'existence des nations autochtones en 1985. Or, la question de fond sur les terres autochtones de l'ancien Domaine du Roi, donc sur les terres ancestrales innues, n'a jamais été réglée, malgré les nombreux arrêts de la Cour suprême du Canada qui tentent de préciser la portée des droits ancestraux. Dans le cadre d'un processus de négociation territoriale en cours depuis plus que trois décennies, la communauté innue de Mashteuiatsh a signé en 2004, conjointement avec les communautés innues d'Essipit et de Nutashkuan, l'*Entente de principe d'ordre général* (EPOG) avec les gouvernements du Québec et d'Ottawa. Cette entente devrait mener à la signature d'un Traité encadrant la relation de nation à nation entre les Innus et les deux paliers gouvernementaux. Les chefs des neuf Premières Nations innues du Québec ont signé une déclaration conjointe le 16 décembre 2013 annonçant vouloir renforcer l'unité de la nation innue et travailler ensemble au développement de sa gouvernance – un premier pas vers la création de ce qui, selon Gilbert Dominique, alors Chef de Mashteuiatsh, pourrait devenir le Conseil de la Nation Innue[5].

Aujourd'hui, la communauté de *Mashteuiatsh*[6] fait partie de la nation innue regroupant au total neuf communautés au Québec, dont sept sont situées sur la Côte-Nord du Saint-Laurent et une au nord du Québec, à la frontière avec le Labrador (voir Figure 1).

Avant de devenir l'emplacement de la réserve actuelle en 1856, Mashteuiatsh était déjà, selon la tradition orale rapportée par les Aînés, un lieu de passage et de rassemblement bien fréquenté. Désignée au départ « Pointe-Bleue » par les colonisateurs, la communauté a officiellement adopté le toponyme ilnu depuis 1985.

5 Lettre ouverte de Gilbert Dominique publiée dans le journal *Le Quotidien*, 23 janvier 2014.

6 Toponyme ilnu signifiant « là où il y a une pointe ».

Figure 1. Carte des nations autochtones du Québec[7].

Situation linguistique à Mashteuiatsh

À l'instar de bien d'autres langues autochtones, la langue innue, anciennement appelée le montagnais, fait partie des langues à tradition essentiellement orale où l'écrit occupe encore aujourd'hui des fonctions très marginales. Pour ce qui est de

7 http://www.apnql-afnql.com/fr/portrait-communautes/carte.php.

l'état de la langue innue parlée à Mashteuiatsh, le *nehlueun*[8], on peut constater que les données de l'enquête sociolinguistique publiées en 1993 par Oudin et Drapeau n'ont pas été actualisées depuis. Les principaux constats en ont été repris dans l'ouvrage sur l'état des langues autochtones au Québec, publié en 2011 sous la direction de la linguiste Lynn Drapeau. Il est à noter qu'au niveau de l'écrit de la langue innue, les communautés de la Côte-Nord ont majoritairement adopté, à la fin d'une démarche commune d'uniformisation s'échelonnant sur près de vingt-cinq ans, un standard pour l'écrit dont l'ouvrage de référence est le *Dictionnaire Montagnais-Français* de Lynn Drapeau (1991).

À Mashteuiatsh, la communauté a voté en faveur d'un processus d'affirmation de leur spécificité linguistique et travaille depuis l'année 2008-2009 à l'uniformisation de l'écrit de leur dialecte, le nehlueun, avec un comité de locuteurs natifs en collaboration avec différents linguistes. Pour l'instant, plusieurs façons d'écrire la langue coexistent et non seulement la prise de décisions par rapport à l'uniformisation est difficile, mais les résultats ne font pas forcément l'unanimité.

Bien que la langue innue soit parlée par un bassin de locuteurs de plus en plus restreint, étant donc considérée « en voie de disparition » (Drapeau 2011, 10), il faut souligner que son usage à travers les neuf communautés est particulièrement hétérogène: en 2007, 78% des Innus sur la Côte-Nord déclaraient avoir l'innu comme langue maternelle et l'utiliser de façon quotidienne. Or, à Mashteuiatsh, « la situation de la langue autochtone est préoccupante » (Drapeau 2011, 24), car seulement 21% des résidents connaissent encore la langue, et ce à des degrés très variés à travers les générations. Contrastant avec ce constat, des statistiques de l'année 2006 montrent que, dans les villages plus éloignées, entre 94 et 100% des résidants disaient connaître l'innu (Drapeau 2011, 24). Revenant sur les constats généraux faits sur l'état de l'innu, Drapeau résume que le bilinguisme langue autochtone/langue majoritaire est en voie de généralisation par le biais de la scolarisation, mais aussi par l'utilisation des médias de masse ou par la communication avec la population non autochtone. L'auteure note également que, parmi les Autochtones scolarisés, le bilinguisme (innu/français) instaure « un état de diglossie généralisée : la langue autochtone est utilisée dans les situations informelles de communication entre les membres de la communauté et la langue majoritaire est utilisée dans les situations plus formelles » (Drapeau 2011, 9). Un constat valide pour la communauté de Mashteuiatsh, vu son avancement dans le processus de transfert vers la langue majoritaire, est celui que le nombre de locuteurs natifs de la langue par tranche d'âge prend la forme d'une pyramide inversée[9] (Drapeau 2011, 10). Ainsi, la maîtrise de la langue se situe le plus du côté des Aînés, et plus les locuteurs sont jeunes, moins ils

8 Dans le dialecte de la langue innue parlé à Mashteuiatsh, *nehlueun* signifie « notre langue ».

9 Le constat de la pyramide inversée est valide uniquement pour la situation linguistique à Mashteuiatsh et non pour la situation démographique de cette communauté, contrairement au reste du Québec.

la maîtrisent, culminant dans la quasi-absence de locuteurs parmi les enfants, même si un certain degré de connaissance peut être constaté.

La situation de la langue innue est très différente d'une communauté à l'autre, et, contrairement aux communautés de la Côte-Nord, le dialecte parlé à Mashteuiatsh est de moins en moins maîtrisé, sans pour autant perdre de l'importance, comme on peut lire à la toute fin du rapport basé sur l'enquête quantitative d'Oudin et Drapeau :

> Il est remarquable de constater que malgré la faible présence du montagnais dans la communauté et son déclin croissant, l'ensemble des répondants accorde une très grande importance à la langue ancestrale. Ils ont également le sentiment qu'elle n'est pas assez mise en valeur. On doit en conclure que les attitudes envers la langue se situent à un tout autre niveau que son usage réel (Oudin/Drapeau 1993, 70).

Mise en contexte du statut de la toponymie autochtone au Québec

Un besoin de plus en plus urgent de prise en charge se fait sentir en ce qui concerne la documentation et la sauvegarde du patrimoine immatériel des Premières Nations du Canada[10], patrimoine dont font partie les toponymes (noms de lieux) en langue autochtone. On peut observer du côté de plusieurs sociétés occidentales une tendance majoritairement commémorative dans la façon de nommer les lieux. Pour les premiers peuples, en parlant pour notre analyse surtout des nations du groupe culturel et linguistique algonquien, ces toponymes constituent des repères sur le territoire ancestral, littéralement et au sens figuré. Les noms de lieux guidaient les déplacements des groupes nomades et semi-nomades suivant un cycle annuel sur les itinéraires les menant aux territoires de chasse et aux sites de rassemblement. Ils désignent dans les langues algonquiennes, comme la langue innue, de façon très descriptive soit les caractéristiques géomorphologiques du lieu, les espèces végétales ou fauniques qu'on y trouve où une histoire ou anecdote en lien avec ce lieu qui a été transmise de génération en génération. Ainsi, dans ces sociétés de tradition orale, un toponyme devient un repère également au sens figuré, car il est porteur de mémoire :

> This link that binds heritage and indigenous communities is related to spiritual values, historical significance, and traditional occupations. Heritage thus holds a strong connection with identity and individual and collective memories. […] Collective memory is formed, among others, by historic environments, containing an infinity of ancient and recent

10 Voir aussi l'article 31 dans la *Déclaration des Nations Unies sur les droits des peuples autochtones* de 2007 : http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_fr.pdf.

> stories, written in stone, brick, or wood, or inscribed in the features of the landscape that become the focus of community identity and pride. (Susemihl 2013, 56)

Cette dimension identitaire est fondamentale pour comprendre le caractère urgent des démarches de revitalisation culturelle et linguistique qu'entreprennent les Premières Nations telles que celle de Mashteuiatsh dont il sera question dans cet article. Face à la perte de plus en plus grande de maîtrise de la langue autochtone chez les jeunes et aux problèmes de transmission qui résultent des tentatives d'assimilation des instances gouvernementales et ecclésiastiques, elles mettent en place des initiatives visant à documenter leur patrimoine toponymique et les savoirs qui s'y rattachent. En parallèle, plusieurs nations essaient d'engager des collaborations avec les institutions gouvernementales mandatées pour reconnaître et éventuellement officialiser ou corriger ces noms de lieux autochtones. Systématiquement éradiqués des cartes il y a un siècle, il ne reste aujourd'hui qu'une petite quantité de toponymes autochtones francisés sur les cartes québécoises.

Ce sont les découvreurs de la Nouvelle-France et par la suite, durant les 18ème et 19ème siècles, les nombreux arpenteurs, explorateurs et missionnaires qui témoignent de la richesse toponymique autochtone du Québec, en laissant des cartes dessinées lors de leurs déplacements guidés par les membres des premiers peuples dans ce nouveau territoire inconnu.

Ainsi, comme sur les cinq cartes produites par le missionnaire jésuite Père Pierre-Michel Laure entre 1731 et 1733, on trouve une multitude de toponymes autochtones, en langue innue dans ce cas-ci (voir Figures 2 et 3).

Or, comme le résume Francine Adam (2008, 32), les liens entre autonomie et toponymie ont une longue histoire au Québec, débutant avec le géographe Eugène Rouillard (1851-1926) qui dénonçait « l'invasion des noms sauvages ». Il déclencha un mouvement qui aboutira à la création de la première instance gouvernementale, la Commission de géographie du Québec en 1912, avec le même Eugène Rouillard comme président fondateur. Cette institutionnalisation marque le début de ce qu'on pourrait qualifier de barbarisme toponymique au Québec (à l'instar de ce qui se faisait dans le Canada anglophone), car les premières priorités de la Commission sont « la reconnaissance, le maintien et l'implantation d'une choronymie française sur le territoire » (Adam 2008, 34). Ainsi, au début du 20ème siècle, environ 15.000 noms de lieux en langue autochtone sont systématiquement effacées des cartes et plans québécois dans un mouvement d'uniformisation radicale au profit du français, visant à « traduire dans la langue de la majorité cette myriade de noms indigènes qui n'ont aucun sens pour nous et dont la lourdeur a de quoi effrayer les esprits les moins rétifs » (Rouillard, cité dans Adam 2008, 33).

Figure 2. Carte du Domaine du Roy en Canada dressée par le Père Laure, missionnaire, et dédiée en 1731 à Monseigneur le Dauphin.

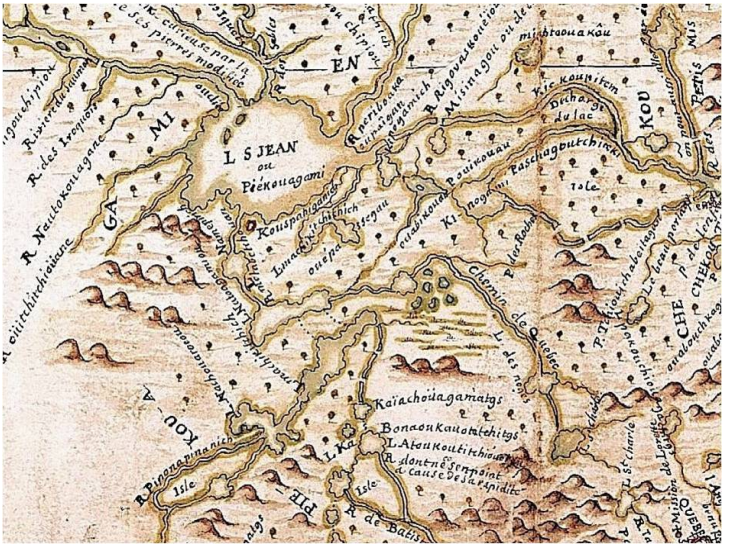

Figure 3. Extrait de la carte présentée ci-haut (Figure 2).

Ce n'est qu'en 1976 que cette institution est remplacée, après la première arrivée au pouvoir du Parti Québécois, par la Commission de toponymie du Québec (CTQ) qui est « responsable de l'inventaire, du traitement, de la normalisation, de l'officialisation, de la diffusion et de la conservation des noms de lieux du territoire québécois » (Adam 2008, 34). Cette description du mandat inclut en principe les noms de lieux autochtones, mais, étant officiellement instituée à l'époque par la Charte de la langue française dans une visée indépendantiste vis-à-vis le Canada anglophone, la CTQ représente avant tout un « organe de promotion et de défense de la langue française » (34). Elle adopte en 1982 une première politique de francisation des noms de lieux, politique qui sera révisée en 1987 pour y inclure, entre autres, une politique relative aux noms autochtones[11]. Jusqu'à maintenant, cette volonté d'intégration des noms de lieux autochtones se résumait surtout par l'encadrement d'opérations d'inventaires de toponymes autochtones et par la publication de répertoires toponymiques pour six des onze Premières Nations présentes sur le territoire québécois[12]. Depuis tout récemment, la Commission de toponymie du Québec fait un effort pour arrimer leur mission avec les initiatives de sauvegarde et de documentation menées par les Premières Nations. Le projet de recherche qui sera présenté dans la section suivante est un exemple concret qui a mené à des discussions et rencontres qui se poursuivent actuellement entre les Pekuakamiulnuatsh et la CTQ.

Projet Peshunakun

C'est à la fin de l'année 2008, dans le contexte décrit dans la section précédente, que les dirigeants des différents services concernés du Conseil des Montagnais (aujourd'hui Pekuakamiulnuatsh Takuhikan[13]) ont mis sur pied un projet de recherche sur l'histoire de l'occupation et l'utilisation du territoire, projet qui est encore en cours et pour lequel on choisit le nom de *Peshunakun*, signifiant « ça s'en vient, approche visiblement; qqch est pour bientôt » (Drapeau 1991, 511). Dans une visée interdisciplinaire définie dès le départ, la démarche de recherche d'envergure poursuit l'objectif global du côté des Pekuakamiulnuatsh de reconstituer leur histoire du territoire ancestral, et ce dans différents volets relevant de plusieurs disciplines: histoire, géographie et géomatique, linguistique, généalogie et archéologie. L'équipe de travail formé en conséquence est constitué de recherchistes et d'intervieweurs-recenseurs ilnu, d'un géomaticien-cartographe de la communauté et d'une archiviste spécialisée en patrimoine ilnu, représentant la Société d'histoire et d'archéologie de Mashteuiatsh (SHAM), le partenaire principal dans le cadre du

11 http://www.toponymie.gouv.qc.ca/ct/toponymie-autochtone/politique-quebecoise-relative-noms-lieux-autochtones/.

12 http://www.toponymie.gouv.qc.ca/ct/toponymie-autochtone/repertoire-toponymie-autochtone/.

13 http://www.mashteuiatsh.ca/.

projet Peshunakun. Deux ressources complètent l'équipe: une linguiste et un anthropologue assumant la direction de la recherche à l'intérieur de ce grand projet. Ces membres de l'équipe sont épaulés par une coordonnatrice ilnu et par différentes ressources spécialisées dans la langue qui apportent leur conseil et soutien dans la validation des données recueillies en nehlueun.

En matière de méthodologie, la première étape consistait à faire l'inventaire à la fois des travaux et études à l'interne de l'organisation du Conseil des Montagnais que des publications relevant du monde académique et pouvant contenir des informations sur l'utilisation et l'occupation du territoire dans une perspective historique. La deuxième étape représente la recherche proprement dite. Tous ces travaux inventoriés (études ethnohistoriques, rapports d'arpenteurs et d'explorateurs, relations des missionnaires, etc.) furent analysés pour en extraire, de façon systématique selon une méthodologie bien définie, des informations de nature variée: les noms des familles ilnu, les sites d'intérêt culturel, les sépultures, itinéraires de déplacement, sites de campement, sites de rassemblement et les toponymes désignant les lieux en langue ilnu. Divers centres d'archives régionaux et nationaux (ex.: Archives des Colonies, Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson) ont été contactés dans le but de consulter des cartes anciennes et d'autres documents historiques pertinents pour documenter l'occupation et l'utilisation du territoire des Pekuakamiulnuatsh.

Parallèlement à la recherche documentaire, une démarche de consultation fut mise en place, lors de laquelle une centaine d'informateurs témoignaient de la manière dont leur famille et leurs ancêtres fréquentaient le *Nitassinan*[14] en mentionnant des sites, itinéraires de chasse, mais aussi des toponymes (noms de lieux). Considérés comme témoins du patrimoine linguistique des Pekuakamiulnuatsh, les toponymes rassemblés, issus de la recherche documentaire ou des entrevues effectuées, sont traités dans un processus de validation en deux temps. D'un côté, avec le support des personnes-ressources attitrées à la sauvegarde de la langue, à la traduction et au suivi du processus de standardisation de l'écrit du nehlueun, un comité de trois à cinq Aînés est mis sur pied pour valider la racine linguistique et les différents sens des toponymes du point de vue de la tradition orale. Afin de mieux s'outiller et sachant que les témoignages oraux n'ont pas encore le poids souhaité dans le contexte de litiges devant la Cour[15], la démarche de validation en comité, qui se poursuit d'ailleurs dans la mesure où le projet continue, fut complétée par une documentation linguistique dite diachronique. À l'aide de cinq dictionnaires de la langue innue, en partant du premier dictionnaire compilé par le missionnaire jésuite Antoine Silvy en 1678, la racine verbale ou nominale de chaque toponyme est documentée à travers le temps, en terminant avec la forme actuelle standardisée, telle

14 Désignation du territoire ancestral en langue innue, *Nitassinan* signifie littéralement « notre territoire ».

15 Référence à consulter pour de plus amples informations sur le sujet : Cruikshank 1992.

qu'elle figure dans le dictionnaire représentant l'orthographe standardisée innue nord-côtière de la linguiste Lynn Drapeau (1991) (voir exemple, Figure 4).

— 850 —

upipalieu , v. t.a.
[upəpəlyew]
il le fait soulever du sol
MIN ûhpan-

upipalitau , v. a.i.
[upəpəltaw]
il fait soulever qqch du sol
MIN ûhpan-

upipalu , v. a.i.,i.i.
[upəpəlu]
il, ça se soulève du sol
MIN ûhpanu

upipitam , v. t.i.
[upəpətəm]
il soulève qqch du sol en vitesse

upipiteu , v. t.a.

upishkutuianamishkᵘ , n. a.
[upəškutyanməškʷ]
tondreux du castor

Upishtikueiau , top.
[upəstukweyaw]
Québec

Upishtikueiau-Tshishe-Utshimau , n. i.
[upəstukuyawtšewtsəmaw]
gouvernement provincial

upissunai , n. a.
[upəssu:ni]
réseau chez les cervidés
MIN upihtshuanai

upit , n. d.a.
[upət]
petites glandes sur le ventre de la martre mâle

Figure 4. Extrait du dictionnaire de Lynn Drapeau montrant le toponyme innu de la Ville de Québec.

Cette façon de faire illustre bien la méthodologie de recherche qui sous-tend en tout temps les travaux à l'intérieur du projet Peshunakun, consistant à viser un équilibre entre la validation par la tradition orale et la documentation par les sources écrites. Le but de cette démarche est de démontrer la continuité de la présence ilnu en matière d'utilisation et d'occupation du territoire par les Pekuakamiulnuatsh aux niveaux ethnohistorique, culturel et linguistique.

Le travail de l'équipe de recherche du projet Peshunakun a débuté en 2009 et se poursuit encore actuellement, sans perdre de pertinence, ni au niveau politique, ni au niveau patrimonial. C'est en fait à la fin d'une première étape de travail et au moment d'une première présentation de résultats à la population et aux dirigeants élus du Conseil des Montagnais que non seulement l'envergure de la démarche entreprise, mais aussi les enjeux éthiques y reliés devenaient de plus en plus évidents. Ces enjeux toujours aussi actuels continuent de se présenter à plusieurs niveaux. On constate que plusieurs recherches menées par des étudiants ou chercheurs universitaires dans la communauté de Mashteuiatsh ne comportaient ni de consentement éclairé de toutes les instances impliquées ni une validation ou un retour adéquat des données aux Pekuakamiulnuatsh. L'administration locale est confrontée à des questions de protection d'informations personnelles, de l'ouverture de l'accès aux résultats de recherche à des chercheurs externes et aux questions touchant à la propriété intellectuelle et à la reconnaissance du patrimoine

culturel et linguistique des Pekuakamiulnuatsh. Ils conçoivent ce patrimoine comme partie intégrante de leur identité distincte, tel que les réflexions anthropologiques des prochaines sections le démontreront.

Le rôle de l'espace dans la construction identitaire

Quand les Innus réfèrent aujourd'hui à leur territoire ancestral pour affirmer leurs droits qu'ils n'ont jamais cédés, ils utilisent la dénomination *Nitassinan* qui se traduit littéralement par « notre territoire » dans leur langue, l'*innu-aimun*. Le Nitassinan est alors l'appellation que l'on retrouve dans la littérature traitant des revendications territoriales et dans les documents officiels élaborés par les Conseils de bande au niveau local et déposés dans le cadre de consultations avec les instances gouvernementales. Entre eux, les Innus préfèrent utiliser *Tshitassinu* qui est une dénomination à caractère plus inclusif et qu'ils traduisent communément par « notre territoire à nous autres »[16], et qui est employée dans un contexte local, en parlant de codes de pratique pour la chasse ou la pêche ou bien de la pratique d'activités culturelles. Enfin, *Nutshimit*, avec ses variantes selon les différents dialectes (*Nuhtshimits*, p.ex.), se traduit littéralement par « dans le bois, dans la forêt » et est une vieille appellation, à laquelle font référence surtout les Aînés, quand ils utilisent des expressions telles que « monter en territoire » ou pour parler du temps où les Innus vivaient encore selon un mode de vie nomade ou semi-nomade. Quand le mot *Nutshimit* est utilisé, c'est dans un registre de langage qui est « la langue originaire du territoire » (Conseil des Montagnais 2005, 24). Ce registre, appelé *shashish nehlueun* à Mashteuiatsh, comporte des expressions et un vocabulaire qui sont aujourd'hui partagés entre Aînés uniquement et qui est au centre de plusieurs initiatives de revitalisation culturelle et linguistique. Ce langage comprend non seulement les mots et expressions utilisés pour désigner la géomorphologie du territoire ainsi que les ressources végétales et animales qu'on peut y récolter, mais également le vocabulaire lié aux activités traditionnelles en territoire, telles le montage des habitations temporaires ou les marques laissés pour désigner des caches pour ceux qui passaient.

Un constat s'impose, notamment celui de la complexité des sens dont est chargée la territorialité innue: « It is sometimes called 'the bush' or 'the country' in English, but nutshimit means a lot more to the Innu people. It is the place that gave birth to Innu culture, and it is the only place where life returns to normal for many Innu families today » (Wadden 2001, 9). Le territoire semble être à la fois espace social, référent culturel dans un monde en transformation et outil d'affirmation identitaire pour une collectivité, dans le cas présent, la nation innue. Comme bien d'autres premiers peuples dans le monde, les Innus semblent concevoir le territoire comme fondement de leur existence même, exprimé à travers des formulations telle qu'

16 « Mot utilisé entre les membres de la Première Nation, de même clan » (Conseil des Montagnais 2005, 14).

« assise territoriale » (Conseil des Montagnais 2005, 18). La langue, la culture et l'identité des Innus sont décrites comme étant enracinées dans le territoire ancestral, ce qui rejoint, dans la pensée paysagère de Berque, une vision géocosmologique du territoire:

> avant l'histoire humaine, il y a celle de la Terre, notre planète; mais pas seulement avant: elle est *sous nos pieds* en ce moment même; c'est elle qui nous fonde, comme c'est d'elle que nous sommes issus. Les Athéniens se distinguaient des autres Grecs en se disant *autochtones*, issus du sol même, c'est à dire indigènes. (Berque 2008, 83)

Joël Bonnemaison, du côté de la géographie culturelle, se sert de la notion de « société géographique » pour décrire une forme de relation d'un groupe local avec l'espace qui peut aider à la compréhension de celle qu'entretiennent les Innus avec leur territoire ancestral. Selon l'auteur, un groupe peut s'auto-définir par un lien territorial autant que par un lien de sang, c'est-à-dire que la filiation est définie à travers le partage d'une même territorialité:

> Pour l'homme de Tanna en tout cas, le territoire n'est pas un produit de sa société, mais bien une entité qui précède et fonde la société. Son espace est vivant, c'est un 'personnage politique', un lieu de médiation entre lui et le cosmos. Ce maillon le relie dans l'espace à ses alliés et dans le temps à ses ancêtres. (Bonnemaison 1996, 78)

Partant de l'affirmation que toute vision de l'environnement par l'être humain est construite à partir de sa culture, Tim Ingold formule l'hypothèse qu'elle doit être revue pour la perception qu'ont les peuples chasseurs-cueilleurs de leur environnement. Il suggère que la dichotomie traditionnelle entre nature et culture ne peut pas être présupposée chez ces peuples pour qui habiter l'espace est une question d'engagement actif dans leur environnement, et non une question de construction mentale au départ:

> The contrast, I repeat, is not between alternative views of the world; it is rather between two ways of apprehending it, only one of which (the Western) may be characterized as the construction of a view, that is, as a process of mental representation. As for the other, apprehending the world is not a matter of construction but of engagement, not of building but of dwelling, not of making a view *of* the world but of taking up a view *in* it. (Ingold 2000, 42)

Dans cette ontologie de l'habiter (« ontology of dwelling »), la relation qu'entretient l'humain avec son environnement est plus intime, au point que l'environne-

ment, par exemple la forêt, est perçue comme un parent, tel qu'Ingold le décrit pour les pygmées Mbuti en République Démocratique du Congo, par exemple. Nous ne sommes pas si loin des Innus qui, à l'instar d'autres premiers peuples d'Amérique, réfèrent à leur environnement comme la « Terre-Mère », désignation adoptée dont il faudrait toutefois analyser l'émergence dans le contexte innu. Cette vision du territoire comme parent comporte deux implications: d'un côté, celle d'un environnement généreux, qui donne inconditionnellement ce dont l'humain a besoin (Ingold 2000, 43), de l'autre côté, de celui de l'humain qui l'habite, la volonté plus que le devoir de prendre soin de cet environnement: « Notre mère la Terre, si elle pouvait parler, elle en dirait tant. Donc, c'est à nous de la protéger, de garder le respect pour notre mère la Terre. » (Conseil des Montagnais 2005, 18). Il faut, par contre, bien nuancer la considération de la notion de « Terre-Mère » et essayer de comprendre sur le terrain à quel moment son utilisation a débuté au sein des Pekuakamiulnuatsh, notamment si elle se fonde sur un vécu ontologique avec le lieu (ici, la terre), ou si son émergence est liée à la (récente) constitution de stratégies politiques de résistance et d'affirmation identitaire. Dans ce sens, Blaser invite à considérer « place as a process, as embodied practices that shape identities, in part through resistance to changing strategies of power » (Blaser 2004, 29). L'évocation du lieu fait donc partie d'un ensemble de pratiques et d'expériences qui se trouve constamment influencé par des systèmes de pouvoir, à l'interne et à l'externe notamment de la communauté innue de Mashteuiatsh.

Un autre aspect que Tim Ingold évoque dans le contexte de la perception de l'environnement et du paysage (landscape) par les chasseurs-cueilleurs et qui s'avère pertinent pour la vision innue de leur territoire, consiste dans la façon de le voir, de l'aborder. Ainsi, tel que l'auteur l'illustre pour les Pintupi en Australie, il ne s'agit pas de marcher dans le seul but d'avancer, de parcourir, mais plutôt de « se métamorphoser » dans le paysage (Ingold 2000, 53). Ceci se fait en utilisant les sentiers déjà parcourus par les ancêtres qui y ont laissé leurs traces, et ce faisant, chaque individu perpétue ce mouvement créatif, en laissant l'empreinte de son identité sur le paysage. Ingold souligne ici une double perspective qui a été ouverte pour la première fois sur la notion d'espace et de lieu par plusieurs auteurs ayant contribué à ce qu'il convient d'appeler le *Spatial Turn* en sciences sociales dans les années 1980, dont le philosophe et historien Michel de Certeau. En établissant une distinction, voire une opposition entre l'espace physique proprement dit et l'espace dynamique, culturel, celui qui est investi de sens et d'identité par ceux qui l'empruntent, il jette les bases d'une analyse multidimensionnelle du lieu, de l'espace et, par extension, de la territorialité. Ainsi, le lien des Pekuakamiulnuatsh à leur territoire est également double : il est à la fois espace de mobilité, parcouru – surtout à l'époque du nomadisme – pour la subsistance, et espace culturel, celui qui enseigne et celui où l'on transmet les savoirs des ancêtres. L'espace analysé sous cet angle devient un résultat de toutes les dimensions qui lui sont attribuées, culturelle, spirituelle, et, aujourd'hui, aussi la dimension politique: « Space occurs as the effect produced by the opera-

tions that orient it, situate it, temporalize it, and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities » (De Certeau 1984, 117).

L'Innu, à l'instar des membres d'autres nations du groupe culturel linguistique algonquien et donc de tradition nomade, forge, vit son identité et définit sa différence à partir du territoire ancestral qui est à la fois espace physique et symbolique. Le territoire devient ainsi espace de vie sur lequel il se déplace, et espace vécu, caractérisé par les pratiques d'activités traditionnelles en forêt, par exemple, et chargé d'un bagage imaginaire légué par les ancêtres et dont les Aînés sont aujourd'hui jugés être les plus importants porteurs: « L'affirmation de sa différence, qui est une affirmation identitaire, passe donc, comme il se doit, par l'affirmation de la singularité de ses origines, de sa langue et de sa culture mais tout cela, pour les Aînés, est fortement chevillé au territoire. » (Vincent 2009, 265). En ce sens, nous pouvons affirmer que l'Innu « fait corps avec l'espace terrestre » (Di Méo, dans Grandjean 2009, 29), espace qui englobe la mémoire et les savoirs des ancêtres, transmis de génération en génération, et qui fait en sorte que le territoire, pour les Innus, devient « ancestral ». Tim Ingold souligne l'importance de la langue comme instrument et outil de transmission dans ce contexte, nous faisant comprendre par la même occasion à quel point la sédentarisation progressive des Autochtones par l'imposition des réserves a fragilisé la territorialité tel que la conçoivent les Innus depuis des millénaires:

> Moving together along a trail or encamped at a particular place, companions draw each other's attention, through speech and gesture, to salient features of their shared environment. Every word, spoken in context, condenses a history of past usage into a focus that illuminates some aspect of the world. […] Thus a way of speaking is, in itself, a way of living the land. Conversely, to remove a community of speakers from the land is to cut the language adrift from its generative source of meaning, leaving it as the vestige of a form of life that has long since been overtaken by its representation as an *object* of memory. (Ingold 2000, 146, 147)

Du côté des Innus, la dimension identitaire de leur territorialité se traduit par l'expression *innu-aitun* et sa variante dialectale *ilnu aitun*, signifiant la combinaison du savoir-être et des savoir-faire en territoire, englobant les valeurs et la culture qui sont objets de transmission intergénérationnelle, aujourd'hui de plus en plus difficile à assurer:

> Plusieurs traditions et rites culturels disparaissent et les porteurs de culture nous quittent. Cet héritage qui nous distingue des autres peuples risque de se perdre si nous n'agissons pas de façon à assurer sa pérennité. Les valeurs léguées par nos ancêtres sont précieuses, nous en

> sommes les gardiens et nous avons le devoir de les diffuser et de les transmettre. (Conseil des Montagnais 2005, 24)

Dans cette seule citation se reflètent les niveaux de territorialité analysés plus haut, notamment la relation de proximité, voire de parentalité, avec l'environnement dont il faut prendre soin, et l'implication identitaire fondée dans le lien avec les ancêtres. Il n'est alors pas étonnant qu'aujourd'hui, ces principes soient défendus par les Innus dans le cadre des négociations territoriales sur la mise en place du régime sur Nitassinan, le territoire ancestral:

> [L]e concept d'affirmation culturelle « Innu Aitun » a animé la réflexion des divers comités qui devaient préciser les modes de gestion du territoire et de la faune. Cohabitation et conservation des ressources sont au cœur du concept Innu Aitun qui pourrait se définir autour du droit de pratiquer des activités traditionnelles ou modernes liées à la culture, à ses valeurs fondamentales ainsi qu'au mode de vie traditionnel des Innus sur leur terre ancestrale. (Girard *et al.* 2003, 8, 9)

En somme, chez les Innus, la construction identitaire semble indissociable du lien territorial. Leur territorialité est encore aujourd'hui d'actualité, indispensable au maintien de leur propre cohérence identitaire, à l'équilibre de « l'émotion identitaire » (Pesteil 2010) aux niveaux individuel et collectif, et implique, comme nous l'avons démontré, non une question de frontières mais plutôt un ancrage spatial fondé sur un lien fortement culturel et spirituel.

Tradition orale et noms de lieux comme témoins indissociables du lien territorial

À la lumière de l'analyse d'une territorialité dans laquelle s'imbriquent espace et identité, il ressort que l'être humain, l'Innu (*Innu/Ilnu* signifiant « véritable humain » en *innu-aimun*) s'engage dans une interaction entre le milieu naturel et les activités, pratiques et rituels qui s'y inscrivent. Dans la vision innue, l'espace est parcouru, pratiqué, vécu et l'individu s'y trouve en constante médiation à la fois avec les ancêtres et le monde des esprits:

> Innu stories and legends, passed on orally from one generation to another, communicate the people's world view. Pishum – the moon and the sun – watch over the planet. Humanlike attributes are assigned to animals. Close observation of animals and their habits has brought with it an ideology that assigns no greater importance to humans than to animals. Humans are the ‹ caretakers › of an environment shared with many other creatures, each relying upon the others for survival. (Wadden 2001, 22)

Dans cette approche holistique qui se dessine, la territorialité chez les Innus est indissociable des savoirs qui s'y rattachent, savoirs qui ne sont pas des faits, mais, dans le sens d'*Innu-aitun*, des notions de savoir-être et savoir-faire transmis à l'intérieur d'une société de l'oralité « dont le mode dominant de communication interpersonnelle et intergénérationnelle repose sur un mode audio-temporel » (Botoyiye 2010, 71). Ainsi, comme le résume José Mailhot, ce qui caractérise ce type de savoir est qu'il s'agit avant tout d'un savoir empirique concernant l'environnement, un savoir qu'on peut qualifier d'expérience et qui est la somme des idées et conceptions que le groupe, la collectivité, possède. Il est donc à la fois cumulatif et dynamique, dans le sens où celui-ci s'adapte aux changements du milieu et selon l'usage que chaque génération en fait (Mailhot 1993, 11-13). Revenant à son hypothèse de la non-existence de la dichotomie entre nature et culture chez les populations de chasseurs-cueilleurs, Tim Ingold souligne que les savoirs sont acquis au cours de l'expérience de perception de l'environnement, au cours de l'engagement de l'individu avec chaque niveau qui constitue ce qui l'entoure. Y incluant l'humain et le non-humain, l'animé et l'inanimé, il parle alors d'un « enskilment » (habilitation) en opposition à ce qu'il appelle « enculturation » (Ingold 2000, 55). Or, tel qu'illustré plus haut, il s'agit là d'un aspect caractérisant les savoirs rattachés à l'espace qu'il ne faut pas isoler du reste, car, comme le formule Sylvie Vincent, la version innue d'événements et d'expériences du passé est un récit à sa façon: « Il ne s'agit pas d'un mythe, ni d'un conte, ni d'une légende, mais d'un récit historique » (Vincent et Bacon 2003, iv). Allant dans ce sens, il faut comprendre que l'acte de transmettre les savoir-faire relatifs au territoire devient par le lien même avec le monde des ancêtres en même temps un moment pour se remémorer (voir aussi la notion de mémoire chez Severi 2007) ceux qui les y ont précédés: « Thus hunters and gatherers, following in the paths of their ancestors as they make their way through the terrain, remember as they go along » (Ingold 2000, 147).

Nous pouvons ainsi dégager que l'Innu, de par le lien d'engagement qu'il entretient avec le territoire, possède une conscience territoriale qui l'amène aujourd'hui surtout à affirmer sa place dans les discussions autour de la gestion des ressources naturelles sur le territoire pour lequel il porte une certaine responsabilité. Deux visions du monde, deux visions du passé se rencontrent ici, tel que l'indique Bonnemaison, notamment l'une évoquant les faits écrits dits historiques, l'autre reposant sur les savoirs d'expérience, de « sagesse » (Bonnemaison 1996, 363), mettant ainsi par le fait même notre conception occidentale du savoir en question:

> la tradition orale nous interroge également sur comment nous construisons ce savoir. L'image stéréotypée de l'historien travaillant en ermite dans ses cartons poussiéreux pour trouver « les faits » historiques est mise à mal, ou du moins jugée insuffisante, lorsque confrontée au caractère vivant, fluide et relationnel de la tradition orale. (Hébert 2012, 56, 57)

Les Innus ont ainsi, dans le cadre des processus d'affirmation de leurs droits ancestraux, toujours mis un accent sur le respect et l'identification de sites à protéger, à caractère patrimonial, le long des grands cours d'eau des bassins hydrographiques de leur territoire ancestral, tels que les rivières Péribonka et Manouane, pour n'en citer que deux exemples (Girard et al. 2002, 9). Ce souci de protection renvoie à la conscience territoriale des Innus qui se fonde sur leur relation identitaire avec leur environnement, les incitant à en prendre soin, tout en honorant la mémoire de ceux qui l'ont fréquenté et occupé avant. Il n'est pas surprenant alors que les lieux identifiés et nommés soient d'anciens lieux de rassemblement durant la période estivale, autour de lacs ou à la jonction de rivières, mais également des lieux chargés d'anecdotes et de légendes en lien avec le monde des esprits. Beaucoup de noms de lieux, déjà répertoriés en langue innue par les premiers missionnaires et explorateurs, et qui sont utilisés encore actuellement par les Innus, décrivent certaines caractéristiques géomorphologiques et des endroits où sont pratiqués certains rituels (Arsenault, dans Turgeon 2009, 159). Les Aînés rapportent d'ailleurs que jusqu'à récemment, les Innus se repéraient entre membres des différentes familles par les toponymes de leurs territoires et plus particulièrement par les rivières qui leur permettent d'accéder à leurs campements et territoires familiaux. Pouvant retourner sur ces lieux, les revoir et en prendre soin comporte encore aujourd'hui une valeur identitaire dans la conscience des Aînés, car ce territoire conserve le passage des générations précédentes, comme ce sont les ancêtres de la famille qui ont aménagé les sentiers de portage, qui ont repéré les endroits stratégiques pour y installer leurs campements et leurs caches, et même aménagé les lieux de sépulture:

> Le territoire est marqué de traces de notre vécu passé et présent. Notre histoire est racontée par les cours d'eau et nous retrouvons beaucoup de sites et de lieux tels des campements, sépultures, portages et lieux de rassemblement. Ils doivent être identifiés, reconnus et protégés. Le développement et l'exploitation des ressources du territoire mettent en péril tous ces sites et lieux d'importance pour notre peuple. (Conseil des Montagnais 2005, 27)

Cette démarche de « nommer, narrer le lieu aimé » (Pesteil 2010, 167), démarche qui en soi n'est pas exclusive aux Autochtones, représente une modalité topo-onomastique (Baudin/Bonnin 2009, 17) de l'expression d'une territorialité qui acquiert une valeur symbolique pour plusieurs groupes autochtones tels que les Innus, face à l'exploitation de leur territoire ancestral. C'est par les toponymes et les conceptions du monde qui s'y rattachent, c'est par leur transmission de génération en génération que les Innus racontent l'histoire de leurs ancêtres, la signification de chaque nom de lieu traduisant un aspect de leur culture et de leur relation avec l'environnement: « geographical names, being an expression of the mental character of each people and each period, reflect their cultural life and the line of deve-

lopment belonging to each cultural area » (Boas 1934, 9). Tel que l'histoire, dans le monde occidental, s'enseigne le plus souvent page après page à l'aide de livres, les Aînés innus, à l'instar de ce qui s'observe chez d'autres groupes algonquiens, enseignent en parcourant le territoire, en réempruntant les sentiers de leurs ancêtres. Ainsi, une formation rocheuse étrange ou un groupe de quelques bouleaux solitaires incitent à transmettre le sens profond qu'un toponyme revêt pour les Innus.

Béatrice Collignon, dans son inventaire des savoirs que les Inuit rattachent à leur environnement, démontre l'importance qui est accordée aux toponymes, lorsque les informateurs insistent pour que ne soient pas notés uniquement le nom de lieu et sa traduction, mais également ses différents sens, c'est-à-dire les récits et enseignements entourant ce lieu (Collignon 1996, 65). L'auteure met ainsi en évidence le caractère oral et langagier non seulement dans la démarche de nommer un lieu qui est ainsi « possédé-par-la-parole » (Le Mouël, cité dans Collignon 1996, 45), mais aussi et surtout dans sa transmission.

Bref, les noms de lieux sont les indicateurs complexes de la territorialité, et représentent en fait, comme le résume Collignon, la combinaison d'une structure linguistique et d'une pratique du territoire qui englobent les explications des idées et visions qui se rattachent à cette perception de l'espace (voir aussi Hunn 1996, Basso 1996). Expression par excellence de l'ancrage identitaire dans l'espace de plusieurs anciens groupes nomades ou semi-nomades, la toponymie devient aujourd'hui objet de revitalisation linguistique et culturelle, et une valeur patrimoniale leur est attribuée. Le projet Peshunakun est encore en cours actuellement à Mashteuiatsh tel que décrit plus haut, et plusieurs projets d'inventaire et de mise en valeur des noms de lieux[17] ont été complétés chez les Innus. Il n'est d'ailleurs pas étonnant que ce soient les nations innues où la langue est encore très pratiquée et transmise (Labrador, Côte-Nord) qui réussissent le mieux dans ces démarches qui sont en effet des tentatives de réconcilier les techniques de transmission par la tradition orale avec les défis de la mondialisation.

Conclusion

Nous espérons avoir démontré l'importance de la toponymie autochtone et des savoirs qui s'y rattachent pour les premiers peuples de tradition orale, pour qui les toponymes représentent, au-delà de repères physiques sur le territoire, également une importante composante de leur patrimoine immatériel car « [e]n l'absence de documents écrits, l'importance du territoire en tant qu'archive, bibliothèque et récit historique – maintes fois soulignée par les activistes autochtones – prend tout son sens » (Desbiens 2008, 12). De ce constat découle une nécessité, avant tout chez les peuples issus d'une tradition orale, d'étudier les savoirs selon leurs propres modes

17 http://www.innuplaces.ca/ (Innus du Labrador); http://www.nametauinnu.ca/ (Innus de la Côte-Nord).

d'existence spatiale et d'analyser comment leur construction s'inscrit dans des lieux particuliers investis par celles et ceux qui les parcourent et fréquentent depuis des millénaires.

Les efforts de prise en charge entamés par la Première Nation de Mashteuiatsh dans un contexte postcolonial confirment que le patrimoine linguistique et culturel immatériel relié entre autres aux toponymes en langue innue reste indispensable dans l'expression de la relation au territoire ancestral. Ils soulignent aussi que les groupes autochtones concernés sont de plus en plus proactifs dans la revendication de partenariats et d'ententes qui intègrent leurs pratiques de sauvegarde et de transmission des savoirs traditionnels de façon égale à l'intérieur des systèmes de savoirs académiques et institutionnalisés, dans le but de « mieux encadrer les activités de recherche, bien saisir les enjeux de la recherche les concernant, participer réellement aux diverses étapes de la recherche et surtout, se réapproprier le plein contrôle du déroulement de la recherche » (Femmes autochtones du Québec Inc. 2012, 8).

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David Neufeld

A Cultural Cartography of the Tr'ondëk-Klondike: Mapping plural Knowledges

Abstract:

Since their first meeting 150 years ago, Yukon Indigenous peoples and Western settler Newcomers have exchanged narratives of meaning. These attempts to engage with the other include a jostling of stories, pageants, and rituals highlighting the values and interests of their culture. Largely place-based, these contact experiences reflect the distinctly different ways peoples understand the world, their place in it and highlight the complexity of cross-cultural encounters. Richard White's concept of a middle ground and Julie Cruikshank's work on Yukon Indigenous narratives both focus on the significance of these encounters. The marks left by these encounters can be charted. The resulting cultural cartography provides a way in which diverse and incommensurable ways of life can be understood and appreciated. The paper applies a cultural cartography to frame the present interest in a world heritage site nomination for the Tr'ondëk-Klondike region of the central Yukon. Mapping these ephemeral contacts makes it possible to better understand the shared history and material culture written on the landscape of the Tr'ondëk-Klondike. Cultural cartography contributes to the negotiation of a respectful and meaningful heritage commemoration built on the mutual interests of all parties.

Résumé:

Depuis leur première rencontre il y a 150 ans, les peuples autochtones du Yukon et les nouveaux colons occidentaux ont échangé des récits significatifs. Ces tentatives de s'engager avec l'autre comprennent une bousculade d'histoires, de spectacles et de rituels mettant en évidence les valeurs et les intérêts de leur culture. Largement basées au niveau local, ces expériences de contact reflètent les manières très différentes des divers peuples de comprendre leur monde, la place qu'ils y occupent et mettent en évidence la complexité de rencontres interculturelles. Le concept de Richard White du terrain d'entente et le travail de Julie Cruikshank sur les narratives autochtones du Yukon focalisent tous les deux sur l'importance de ces rencontres. Les traces laissées par ces rencontres peuvent être cartographiés. La cartographie culturelle qui en résulte, fournit un moyen par lequel ces manières diverses et incomparables de vivre peuvent être compris et appréciés. Dans cette contribution j'applique une cartographie culturelle pour encadrer l'intérêt actuel d'une candidature pour déclarer la région Tr'ondëk-Klondike du Yukon central comme site du patrimoine mondial. La cartographie de ces contacts éphémères permet de mieux comprendre l'histoire commune et la culture matérielle

inscrite dans le paysage de la Tr'ondëk-Klondike. La cartographie culturelle contribue à la négociation d'une commémoration du patrimoine respectueuse et constructive fondée sur les intérêts mutuels de toutes les parties.

Acknowledgements

I relied upon the interest and support of many people in preparing this paper. The first draft was prepared in 2013 for the Tr'ondëk-Klondike World Heritage Advisory Committee – Outstanding Universal Value Working Group in Dawson, Yukon. I appreciate the valuable guidance provided by Chair, Paula Hassard, and members of the committee, Lee Whalen, Jen Laliberte, and Jody Beaumont. Thanks are also due to Kerstin Knopf, Janelle Rodriques and Peter Lourie for their improvements to this paper. The invitation to present at the February 2014 meeting of the *Gesellschaft für Kanada-Studien* in Grainau, Bavaria, and the financial support of Yukon Culture Quest, resulted in this paper.

By far my deepest debt, however, continues to be to the people of the Tr'ondëk-Klondike who have shared their stories, listened to – and corrected – my ideas about their history, and who continue to welcome me into their community.

Introduction

Cultural knowledges rise from human communities' responses to being in the world. Communities construct an intellectual frame rising from the perceived needs and opportunities they experience in their homelands. These multi-varied cultural knowledges are coded into stories of meaning – a cultural narrative – incorporating the values passed on by their Elders and privileging the skills and knowledge needed to manage the future.

When vastly different communities meet, each with different cultural narratives, there may be a clash of lifeways. Each group attempts to impose, or at least demonstrate the validity of, their own way of life. With a large power differential and different values it becomes almost impossible for the more powerful to understand, or even recognize, that there is another way of life present and another way of knowing the world and presenting one's world views. If they do note a difference they work to incorporate that difference, on their own terms, within their frame of understanding.

With Western European civilization's expansion into North America through the nineteenth century, their cultural narrative was framed by Enlightenment ideas of rationalism and a universally applicable science. The resulting ordering of nature and its mid-nineteenth century expression in the theory of evolution became the universal frame applied by Europeans to the rest of the world. In a cultural sense these Settlers

felt they were the intellectual and cultural vanguard of a shared humanity. In meeting other cultures, European settlers viewed Indigenous peoples as still incomplete, as relics of their own past. Difference was denied by absorbing other peoples into a model of human development that they were the leaders of. Some peoples might be able to emulate European success; others, incapable of being, or unwilling to be like Europeans, were deemed an unsuccessful species doomed to pass out of history (de Sousa Santos, 1). In the late nineteenth and into the twentieth century this attitude challenged northern Canadian Indigenous peoples in their attempts to accommodate Newcomers.[1] One of the most prominent points of this contact was the Klondike gold region in the middle Yukon River where European origin settlers met Northern Athapaskan peoples, specifically the Tr'ondëk Hän, who struggled to incorporate these Newcomers into their ways of being in the world.

Potlatches and Pageants – A Century-long Conversation in the Tr'ondëk-Klondike

In May 2004 the Government of Canada released its second "Tentative List for World Heritage Sites." On the list of diverse cultural and natural sites was "The Klondike." Originally conceived as recognizing both the "exceptional adaptation and innovation of First Nations people" and "an outstanding example of a mining landscape," the site was promoted as an illustration of "life before, during and after the world's great 19th-century gold rushes" (Canada 2004, 21). Of the seventeen world heritage sites recognized in Canada, as of 2014, fifteen are based upon Western settler society values, either recognizing European settlement and development of northern North America (L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Site, designated in 1978; Historic District of Old Québec, 1985; Rideau Canal, 2007), or highlighting the Western scientific interests in natural history (Dinosaur Provincial Park, 1979; Waterton Glacier International Peace Park, 1995; Joggins Fossil Cliffs, 2008). Two sites, Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump (1981) and SGang Gwaay (1981), address Indigenous history and culture. Both of these nominations, however, were originally based upon Western archaeology (Neufeld 2001, 61-62) and settler society's romanticization of the disappearance of Indigenous peoples. Neither nomination included input from contemporary First Nations communities. In fact both nominations explicitly noted the absence of Indigenous peoples in the present.[2] Significant chang-

1 The three terms, Newcomer (the gold rush population and clique of government employees most of whom were transient), Locals (that part of the non-Indigenous population that stayed in the Klondike to run businesses or work, that is, they made the Klondike their permanent home) and First Nation (the Indigenous population long resident in the region), each identify distinct populations in the Klondike region. While newcomer and local are generally understood as generic terms, they are capitalized in my text as identifiers for specific groups of people in the same way that Indigenous and First Nation are used.

2 "[The Head-Smashed-In bison jump complex is] directly and materially associated with the survival of the human race during the pre-historic period" (Advisory Body Evaluation of Head-Smashed-In Bison Jump Complex).

es over the past 25 years, to both UNESCO world heritage site nomination criteria and the Canadian national commemoration programs, address some of this earlier culturally entrenched imbalance.[3]

The Klondike Gold Rush of 1896-98 has been incorporated into Canada's national story. In the mid-1950s the national commemoration program began identifying themes, items and buildings that would eventually form an interconnected set of national historic sites. These included the international Chilkoot Trail as part of the travel route of the miners, a pair of paddlewheel steamboats celebrating the Yukon River traffic connecting the Klondike gold fields with the world, and many of the historic buildings making up the core of Dawson. For almost four decades the national government supported a massive restoration and development program contributing to the economic fortunes of the region. Today this web of historic sites retains a comprehensive gold rush interpretive program, annually hosts over 300,000 tourists and courts a continuing series of film and television productions (Yukon Tourism Indicators).

As the Parks Canada historian for these historic sites from 1986 to 2012, I was immersed in the development and presentation of this gold rush history. The interpretive themes of the Klondike national historic sites emphasize the establishment of Canadian government control of the region and the development of corporate industrial infrastructure – the Mounted Police presence, court houses and commercial buildings, the enormous gold dredges, the railways and riverboats. What was preserved and presented was the all-embracing grand narrative of the modern Canada of the 1950s and 60s, the development of a Western industrial nation-state, the establishment of a social safety net, and the acknowledgement and celebration of Canada's "cultural mosaic," the diverse immigrants that built modern Canada.

The Klondike commemorations are an artful articulation of Harold Innis's 1920s nationalist idea of Canada's boundaries and development as the outcome of trans-Atlantic settlement patterns and economic enterprise. Subsequently developed into a historiographical idea, the Laurentian thesis (Francis 2006) describes a Western discourse of nation building and civic accommodation. This fulfillment of the Western Enlightenment model of statecraft explains the organization and evolution of the modern democratic state, which provides its citizens with "peace, order and good government."[4] In this grand narrative, economic, social and cultural agency is exercised only by the state, in the pursuit of democratic governance and material progress.

"The abandonned [sic] village of Ninstints on Anthony Island bears a unique testimony to the vanished civilization of the Haida Indians …" (Advisory Body Evaluation of Anthony Island).

3 International changes are summarized in Harrison (93-94 and chapter 6) and national changes are noted in Neufeld (2008, 21-22). Susemihl provides a detailed assessment of the different character of contemporary management of these sites and the outcomes for the agency of Indigenous peoples (51-77).

4 A brief analysis of this shared British Imperial constitutional obligation of the Canadian Government is offered by Reynolds (2012).

While a significant story and certainly an important element of a World Heritage Site nomination, the overwhelming weight of the existing national commemorations creates challenges in addressing the history of both the non-Indigenous Locals of Dawson and regional First Nation people. Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, since their 1998 agreement with Canada the self-governing First Nation of the Tr'ondëk Hän of the region, have qualms about their lack of presence within the grand narrative of Canada presented at the Klondike region national historic sites.[5] They have little interest in being tolerated and accommodated by the national government. The recent Yukon First Nation self-government treaties with Canada are premised upon a model of culturally pluralist governance. As Roddy Blackjack, an Elder of the Carmacks/Little Salmon First Nation, stated, we must become "two cultures side by side" (Blackjack quoted in Graham, 6).[6] According to respected political philosopher James Tully, this type of cultural pluralism means a state with distinct cultural groupings constantly negotiating with each other on the basis of mutual recognition, respect for the continuity of group traditions with governance rising from mutual consent (Tully 1995, 116). In the post-treaty Yukon, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in wish to present their own cultural narrative of the Tr'ondëk-Klondike region alongside that of Canada.

Originally prepared for the Tr'ondëk-Klondike World Heritage Advisory Committee, this paper outlines a historical approach including these different perspectives of the past. By focusing on the communications between peoples across a cultural divide, instead of considering only their incommensurable ways of life, it is possible to more equably appreciate the cultural values and social interests of all perspectives. With such an approach it may be possible to negotiate a respectful and meaningful commemoration built on the mutual understanding of all parties. The Tr'ondëk-Klondike committee needs a cultural cartography[7] of the century of conversations amongst the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, Dawson Locals and the Canadian government – between Western and Indigenous discourses – to navigate a path to cultural pluralism. This cultural cartography maps the *performances of contact*, those public events, shared activities and formal exchanges through which one group expresses its identity and values in an attempt to communicate to or influence another. By investigating these ephemeral contacts, the pageants, the potlatches, the court cases and the football matches, it becomes possible to better understand the

5 The recognition of the cultural imbalance of heritage commemorations in the Yukon is acknowledged in *Chapter 13 – Heritage* of the Agreement. Sections 13.4.1. and 13.4.2., known as the "catch-up and keep-up clauses," require the Canadian and Yukon governments to achieve an equitable balance of investment between First Nation and non-Indigenous heritage (Canada, 1993).

6 The basis of the Yukon First Nations approach to making an agreement with Canada, and their recognition of different histories, is presented in Yukon Native Brotherhood (1973, 11).

7 White and Cruikshank (1998) provide the inspiration for the idea of a cultural cartography. Both describe trans-cultural contacts between North American Indigenous people and Newcomers as set in and shaped by place.

shared history and distinctive material culture written on the landscape of the Tr'ondëk-Klondike. It makes visible the cultural narratives of all parties.

Meeting Strangers – Chief Isaac at Moosehide

The Hän people of the middle Yukon River were well aware of the wider world when the first gold rush stampeders arrived in the late 1890s. For over half a century, the Hän had been trading with Euro-American fur buyers and had met, and lived with, gold prospectors. By the early 1890s the Hän had also met the Northwest Mounted Police (NWMP), there to enforce British Law, and a proselytizing Anglican Missionary. In addition, they had suffered the ravages of a series of epidemics accompanying these newcomers, but nevertheless remained an active and coherent community, well known for their sharp trading ability and their ebullient dancing and singing tradition. The dramatic arrival of tens of thousands of stampeders on their lands, while not completely overwhelming the Hän, demanded considerable adjustments. In keeping with their custom of welcoming people to their camps, the Hän worked diligently to establish positive working arrangements with these Newcomers, yet the overcrowding forced them to relocate from their fishing camp, Tr'ochëk, at the confluence of the Klondike and Yukon rivers. Chief Isaac of the Hän led the community downriver, from the new city of Dawson to another of their camps, known as Moosehide. Despite this, he maintained continuous contact with the Newcomers for some thirty years, always actively forwarding the interests and values of his community through a wide-ranging program of public announcements, ceremonies and demonstrations.

Every Christmas, Chief Isaac issued an invitation to all Dawsonites to visit the Hän village of Moosehide. On Christmas Eve 1902 he joked with the attending Newcomers about being approached by a group of San Francisco businessmen interested in buying the Yukon. He claimed to be considering their offer and was making arrangements for his own people's retention of certain lands. He was, however, uncertain of what the Newcomers would do when their eviction notice came. Two days later he hosted the townspeople at a potlatch, a far more serious act of diplomacy. The visitors' acceptance of his gifts cemented their agreement to his earlier statement of ownership to the lands they were settling upon. The gift response by Major Wood, the NWMP Superintendent, emphasized the government's recognition of Chief Isaac's claims (*Klondike Nugget*, 09 Dec. 1902 and *Dawson Daily News*, 24 Dec. 1902).

The following year a large group of First Nation dancers from the central Yukon put on a cultural show at the Dawson Auditorium Theatre. Some one hundred dancers performed two shows of their traditional dances to packed audiences. The evening was hosted by Henry Phillips, a mission-educated Tlingit from Alaska, who provided an interpretive commentary on the dances. Phillips, used to the closer and much longer engagement of the coastal Tlingit with Russians, British and Ameri-

cans, expressed his surprise at the apparently limited contact between the peoples of Dawson and Moosehide (*DDN*, 20 Dec. 1903 and 02 Jan. 1904).

Hän men performing ceremonial dance for Newcomer audience in Dawson City, Empire Day May 24, 1901 *(Yukon Archives, Bill Roozeboom collection, #6290)*.

Chief Isaac also attempted to assist the Newcomers when they ran into problems. The central Yukon has limited summer rainfall, and a drought in 1905 made it difficult to wash out the placer gold, hindering production. Early in the new year a number of the larger mining companies and the Territorial Council invited a professional rainmaker, Charles Hatfield from California, to sign a $10,000 contract "to increase the rainfall […] to insure a successful and prosperous summer for the placer gold mining industry of the Dawson District" (Canada 1906). By June 11, 1906, Hatfield's equipment was in place and he began his demonstration. "Threatening clouds" soon gathered, but despite fulminations only two small showers resulted. The *Yukon World* noted "the sluice boxes [remained] as dry as a wagon tongue" (*YW*, 12 June 1906, 13 June 1906, 14 June 1906, 16 June 1906). Chief Isaac then intervened, claiming that Hatfield's failure was due to the power of the four Hän Medicine Men. The chief announced he would stop all rain until Hatfield was dismissed but promised his Medicine Men would produce "oceans of rain" for just $5000. The Territorial Council, sold on the "scientific method," attributed Hatfield's failure to the still imperfect understanding of the principles of scientific rainmaking (*YW*, 14 June

1906).[8] Already subjected to national ridicule for the original rain making contract, the Territorial Council had no appetite for taking up Chief Isaac's offer, they dismissed it as superstitious nonsense.[9] While the contact between cultures remained limited, it did not entirely preclude co-operative activity. In the summer of 1915 the Peel River people visited to challenge the men of Dawson to a football match. Differences in equipment – the ball was of moose hide stuffed with caribou hair – and rules were negotiated, compromises in playing style accepted and a spirited and well attended match followed. It was actually possible to do things together if both sides put their minds to it (*DDN*, 10 July 1915).

Despite Chief Isaac's efforts to reach out to the Newcomers, there appears to have been little reciprocal interest in, and even less comprehension of, their First Nation neighbours. Fully engaged in the construction of their own world, the Newcomers expected the exotic "natives" to be transformed into more recognizable elements of the pioneer landscape. The *Dawson Daily News* regularly published editorials requesting the government to educate the "natives" on the benefits of farming, or to introduce "Reindeer herds, so that natives […] may substitute them for the present wasteful and costly dogs, and become self-sustaining and well-to-do owners of herds" (*DDN*, 06 June 1911).[10] The refusal of the Hän to fulfill these expectations began to render them less visible. One journalist, suggesting Chief Isaac was spoiled by his 1902 trip to San Francisco, characterized him as one of the rural bumpkins in Shakespeare's *As You Like It* (*DDN*, 25 Feb. 1908). Moosehide and its inhabitants were not considered by the Newcomers to be a part of the real world. From the Newcomers' perspective of racial evolution, it was impossible for the "Indian" to be in the present, or have a future, unless they embraced the lessons of Western civilization. The Hän had to either abandon their cultural identity, thus becoming invisible, or if they stubbornly retained their values and land-based life ways they would be isolated as a spoiled people destined to disappear after contact with a superior race. Either way they became exiles in their own land.

Making Home – Anglo-Saxon Pioneers become Tr'ondëk-Klondike Locals

The citizens of 1900 Dawson understood their community as a triumph of Western colonial civilization. They were proud of its modern services, its connections to the wider world, and of its mining wealth in particular. While nationalist tensions periodically flared between Canadians and Americans over the then current Alaska

8 Weather information courtesy of Don Watt, A.E.S. Weather Station, Whitehorse and Daily Climatological Data 2.0, Climate Services Division (A.E.S. Sept., 1989).

9 I was present when Julia Morberg, a Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Elder, "cut the sky" with her knife to prevent rain from interrupting a field research program. This act was not about power, rather it demonstrated the significance of a world view focused on right relations (Neufeld, 2011).

10 "The government might do a great service for these natives by teaching them to farm" (*DDN*, 13 July 1912).

boundary dispute, Dawson community leaders worked to focus attention on the shared elements shaping their new identity. Although diverse in national origin, the vast majority of Dawson's populace were Caucasians from Canada, the United States and Western Europe. The nineteenth-century racist belief in (vaguely bounded) Anglo-Saxon superiority, demonstrated by the power of imperial Britain and the burgeoning possibilities of the American Republic, provided the Newcomers with a sense of a shared destiny to civilize and lead the world (Horsman, 84, 189-190).

In Dawson, the Newcomers also engaged in a shared economic activity. Their livelihoods – whether from mining or the supporting infrastructure of transportation, commerce or government – depended upon the extraction of gold from the creeks. The pursuit of gold also established a shared annual round of work. In the early days this meant a winter down the mine shaft digging out the gold bearing gravels. "Clean-up", the spring sluicing out of the gold, was completed by early June. Miners were paid their winter's wages, stores had their bills settled and the river boats arrived with the first fresh fruit and crates of liquor after a long winter. It was a time to celebrate (Neufeld 2000, 77-79). It is through the celebration of the resulting holidays that we witness the formation of a community in the Yukon and the transformation of Newcomers into Locals. The earliest public holiday of the Yukon Newcomers was Empire Day, usually held on May 24. In turn-of-the-century cosmopolitan Dawson, it was also known as All Nations' Day. Conveniently fitting into the seasonal round of mining the celebrations, including a parade and sports program, also emphasized the racial Anglo-Saxonism identity bonding together of Americans and Britons.[11] In 1902 the parade was led by the NWMP detachment. Chief Isaac, wearing his father's fifty-year-old beaded buckskin suit (*DDN*, 26 May 1902) followed, ahead of the Dawson militia and nine British veterans of the Riel Resistance.[12] The main body of the parade included leading government officials, with the US consul, then union members, the fire department and the floats of the different town businesses. The children, trained in drill by the NWMP officers (*YS*, 13 May 1902), joined the parade at the school. The afternoon's games were governed by the North American United Caledonian Association rules. The rules reflected the ethnic pride in Scottish cultural identity thus superseding any national jingoism and minimized nationalist bravado.[13] There were also mid-summer celebrations of Canada's Dominion Day (1st of July) and the American 4th of July. These, generally limited to

11 The *Yukon World*, July 8, 1905 provides a July 4th oration typical of the time: "We who are called Klondikers are here today in obedience to that imperial spirit of conquest and love of adventure which animates […] Anglo-Saxons, to wrest from unwilling and inhospitable nature the riches and resources she commands."

12 The Riel Resistance was a brief and unsuccessful uprising by Indigenous peoples in the western prairies against the government of Canada in 1885.

13 Redmond notes that because of the internationalist character of these rules they are recognized as instrumental in creating track-and-field athletics in North America (188).

sports and speeches, similarly emphasized the unity of the Newcomer community and the expansion of the Anglo-Saxon race.

These public celebrations minimized national distinctions in a very diverse community.[14] Seeking unity through a racial Anglo-Saxonism, represented by the democratic governance institutions of Britain and the United States, the community established clear boundaries of belonging in their remote northern setting. They celebrated the establishment of a modern city and the possibilities of individual success through placer gold mining. Settlement of the Klondike region by individual miners on their own claims was understood to be the same as settlement of the Western plains, where individual families staked their future on pieces of land. These active settlements in the "New World" were moving the centre of the Anglo-Saxon empire across the Atlantic from Britain to North America.

The notion of Anglo-Saxon racial identity grew out of the popularization of the late nineteenth-century ideas of evolutionary science. Clearly Great Britain and the United States, with their democratic institutions, well-educated populations and colonial possessions, were the future.[15] It was understood that "less advanced" races were clearly incapable of effective self-government and needed to be ruled. This prevailing racial attitude, while not necessarily promoting direct violence against others, provided a "scientific" explanation of why the neighbouring Indigenous "races", like the Hän, would gradually disappear. They were simply unfit; contact with a more civilized race invariably meant the less civilized "melted away."[16] Chief Isaac's presence in the 1902 Empire Day celebrations was doubtless due to his desire to forward the interests and future of his people. Whatever his intent, the editor of the *Yukon Sun* framed his speech within the dying race paradigm.

> **Chief Isaac's Pathetic Oration**
>
> The last feature of the gathering was a pathetic address by Chief Isaac. He referred to the days long past when the Indians were here in as a great numbers as the whites are at present. At that time the Indians were all rich, had plenty of meat and fish and otherwise were in the most prosperous position […]. The white men then arrived and the Indians were driven east, west, north and south, lands were taken away from them, the whites had taken possession of their country, taken their gold, their game was destroyed and driven away, and nothing but a remnant

14 Over forty different countries of birth were noted in the 1901 Census for Dawson (Porsild, 203).

15 "Canada's great West has the climatic conditions, the resources and the laws to breed, maintain and wisely govern the most virile community of Anglo-Saxons in the world. Its vastness and its unlimited capacity make it today one of the best guarantees of the indefinite supremacy of the race. […] it would seem that Anglo-Saxonism united in sympathies and ideals will largely control the progress and evolution of humanity for many generations" (*YW* 04 July 1906).

16 On the Russian colonization of the Aleuts Julia McNair Wright notes: "This intermingling of races had its usual effect, and the less civilized melted away" (Wright, 55).

> is left, and they are reduced to poverty and are without means of sustenance. (*YS*, 25 May 1902)[17]

Throughout the first decade of the twentieth century there were major changes in the character of the Klondike mining industry. Individual claims operating on a small scale were replaced by outside corporations grouping whole creeks into extensive holdings to be more efficiently mined out with large dredges. The resulting disruption of the individualistic mining system resulted in a significant population drop and a much-reduced government presence. The withdrawal of this leadership left the community rudderless for several years. In consequence, there was a near cessation of formally organized public celebrations. Dawson old timers, those non-Indigenous prospectors and traders in the Yukon before the gold rush, stepped forward to reinvigorate the social life of their town. In concert with the town's business men, the Yukon Order of Pioneers (YOOP)[18] undertook the establishment of a new celebration, one more closely associated with the geographical and historical roots of the Klondike.

The new celebration organized by this group of Locals emphasized the experience of finding gold and celebrated the earlier individualism of the prospectors and hand miners. As pioneers they were self-reliant and helped each other out. And they were successful – gold was found in astonishing quantities. The YOOP members met informally in late summer each year to clean up their Pioneer cemetery and enjoy an evening of stories in a quiet celebration of the original discovery of gold on August 17, 1896. The first Discovery Day holiday was organized in 1911. The new holiday was a practical adaptation, and visceral response to, the seasonally altered work schedule of the summer industrial mining methods and the related transformation of the pioneer into an industrial proletariat. The celebration offered a deeper local grounding of their experience of the Klondike. The *Dawson Daily News* opined:

> The Discovery Day celebration […] stimulates a love of the Yukon and pride over the success[ful] … development of the Northland. … Yukon has been their home. They have been afforded a pleasant home. The country has been good to them … Little wonder is it then … that the Klondiker has seen fit to … celebrate the day which marks the discovery that … made this a place of permanent occupancy, a land of homes and profitable pursuits. (*DDN*, 18 Aug. 1911)

17 Jack London's *The League of the Old Men* (1902) offers a more developed version of this narrative of racial superiority from the assumed voice of a Yukon River First Nation old man. Thanks to Peter Lourie for this reference.

18 Mutual aid society, established at Forty Mile, Yukon, 1894. Membership was originally limited to those in the Yukon watershed before the gold rush. The society was subsequently dedicated to the development and settlement of the Yukon (Neufeld 2004, 680).

Discovery Day Parade ca. 1919 *(DCM 1997.213.1.124)*.

The central feature of the celebration remained a parade. In contrast to the Empire Day parade's promotion of an Imperial presence and an international destiny for Anglo-Saxons, the Discovery Day parade is a local history pageant celebrating pioneer settlement on the frontier. Nevertheless, the new parade retained a connection to the earlier Anglo-Saxon governance narrative. In its early days, the Discovery Day parade was led by two YOOPs with large Union Jacks (*DDN*, 19 Aug. 1912). They were followed by a group of Mounted Police and the musical strains of the Dawson Brass Band. The main body of the parade was a collection of floats, representing the businesses and industries of the region. In 1912, these included the mining industry, the Northern Commercial Company, the Cascade Laundry and the delivery wagon of the O'Brien Brewing and Malting Co. Other floats showed off a full-size replica of the first log cabin in Dawson, a sourdough boat and even Olaf Olsen's "great wooden cart, the first wheeled vehicle made and used in Dawson." Chasing behind the floats were the children of the Klondike, "between 100 and 200 strong, many of them born in Dawson or on the gold creeks, all radiant in their glowing health." After them came the Eagles and "the hardy men who opened the Yukon to the world", the almost 500 members of the YOOP. The parade ended with the Dawson fire department rigs.

A grand parade, variations of it have wound through the streets of Dawson annually since then. A First Nation float has periodically appeared in the parade since the early 1970s.[19] The parade remains an important element in the community's shared

19 Joe Henry and a group of Indigenous youth dressed in traditional clothing on a float entitled *Together Today for our Children Tomorrow* were in the parade in the early 1970s. *Dawson City Museum* photo 1995.155.8.

history. First, the YOOP enter the "wilderness" – the chaotic and wild space and time before the discovery of gold. Their position at the head of the parade, at the point of creation in the Yukon, reinforces their place at the apex of the community's social hierarchy. They are supported by the Mounties on horseback, the paramilitary representatives of the Canadian government who first arrived in the Yukon in 1894. As the guardians of law and order, the Mounted Police lay a foundation of order for future development. The Stampede itself is represented by the big brass band which in its turn announces the tidal wave of civilization, and connection to the Outside and the innovations of history – log cabins and the wheel. These however, are merely the prelude for the arrival of the real benefits of modern life – economic development. The floats of the mining industry and the various related businesses are ordered by their time of arrival in Dawson, their contribution to the structure of a modern colonial community in the "wilderness". And with this structure, there is a possibility for a future – the children. Finally, after the remaining stalwarts of the fraternal order of the Eagles and YOOP have been acknowledged, there is the highest order of Anglo-Saxon civilization – the local organization of self-government for the common good, the fire trucks.

Although Anglo-Saxon identity was backgrounded to the story of the pioneer and the creation of a new home place, the "whiteness" of the achievement remained. William Ogilvie, the Yukon Commissioner during the gold rush, identified Skookum Jim Mason (Keish) in his Tagish First Nation identity, as the discoverer of gold (Ogilvie, 125-130). However a pioneer narrative of making home needed white men as founders. Thus discovery, and the establishment of the community, was jointly attributed by Dawson Locals to George Carmacks, an American, and Robert Henderson, a Canadian. This convenient pairing was supported by one of the earliest national historic designations by the Canadian government in May 1926.[20] The plaque, posted on the portal of the Mining Recorders Office in Dawson, stated:

> YUKON GOLD DISCOVERY
> To the memory of the indomitable prospectors and miners, who braving extreme dangers and untold hardships, crossed over the Chilkat and Chilkoot passes into the unexplored valley of the Yukon, and thus paved the way for the discovery in 1896 of the rich gold fields with which the names Robert Henderson and George W. Carmack are inseparably connected.

With the representation of an established social hierarchy and the various elements of the civilization they have built, the parade, in reality a moving pageant, is a

20 F.W. Howay of the Historic Sites Board re-inforced the intent of the commemoration in a Feb. 21, 1930 letter to J.B. Harkin, the Canadian Parks Commissioner: "We are purposely avoiding the Klondike rush of '98 and doing homage to those who pioneered the way" (National Archives Canada, RG 84, Vol. 1398 f. HS-10-46 pt. 1).

microcosm of the imagined history of the Yukon. The annual parade celebrates the birth of the Territory, the start of history in the North and the progress of its self-governing citizens in a new land. It describes and reinforces the set of values forwarded by the Newcomer community. Until well into the twentieth century it also left out any reference to First Nation peoples, though Chief Isaac, and later his descendants, continued to make regular appearances at Discovery Day celebrations.[21]

Chief Isaac, his wife Eliza and daughter Angela at Discovery Day celebrations in 1923 *(DCM 1990.77.15)*.

Modernisation and the State

Both the Hän in Moosehide and the Locals in Dawson settled into a quiet coexistence. As these communities lived distinctly different lives, relations between them were limited, but generally congenial. Hän leaders continued to remind Locals of their presence and their determination to persist. Despite the cultural differences there was a gradual adaptation by both Locals to their adopted environment and Hän to the new economy through this period. Locals became more adept at making use of the land. Learning from the subsistence practices of their First Nation neigh-

21 Local esteem for Chief Isaac is also evidenced by the granting of an honorary membership in the YOOP to him (Dobrowolsky, 80). Keish's role in the discovery was not officially recognized until 1972.

bours they supplemented the expensive, and tasteless, canned goods imported from outside with berry picking, fishing and hunting. There was also a growing recognition of the First Nation way of life and the challenges that their own presence created. Locals began to question the wisdom of the changes their society was imposing upon their First Nation neighbours. Perhaps their way of living was not for everyone. In 1938 the *Dawson Daily News* editorialized on the future of the "native": "The grasping white man rushed in, a Bible in one hand and a bottle of liquor in the other, to wish upon the native every balmy idea to disrupt his normal mode of living. We have done everything to the Arctic native except to leave him alone to live as he chooses" (*DDN*, 14 Jan. 1938). This new concern for the freedom from interference was perhaps a distinction between the experienced Locals and the previous more aggressive Newcomer society.

The Hän continued their traditional hunting and fishing rounds out of their village at Moosehide. However, through the period they also adopted new practices. The Anglican Church was allowed to run a day school and several respected Elders became Special Constables for the Mounted Police in the village. Young men began to reach into the cash economy through wood cutting, seasonal work on the river boats and supplied wild meat and fish to the Dawson shops. Women continued the contract sewing and beading work that had started well before the gold rush. Life was not easy but there was a general recognition of the different ways that people could and did live in the Yukon. This slow acknowledgement and exploration of each other's life ways was soon to end. The Second World War and the rise of the national social state in the 1940s and 50s would dramatically alter the lives of all Yukoners.

The Great Depression of the 1930s and the demands of global conflict surrounding the Second World War radically altered the form of Canadian governance. The national government's organization of resources to fight the war and subsequently enhance the quality of life for citizens made social security a pillar of the Canadian state. This signal achievement, still a cherished vision of what Canada is, included the provision of universal health care, old age pensions, family allowances and numerous other social benefits. In addition, it included a drive to massively expand the economy through industrial and natural resource development. This modern structure was carefully designed to meet the needs of Canada's increasingly urban and secular Caucasian society. These changes redefined the normal way of living, changes not quite so amenable to Indigenous peoples like the Hän.

The expansion of the modern social state was built upon the idea of individual citizens and their rights and responsibilities to the state (Erickson, 109-114). Canadian citizens needed to fit within the parameters of this civic service in order to be recognised by the state. First Nation peoples, classed as wards of the state under the *Indian Act*, needed to be transformed in order to become citizens. State attempts to modernize the Hän resulted in a disastrous and painful set of enforced separations; between generations, from the land and even from their history:

"Here this big red truck came along with kids behind. Holy man they load a whole bunch… of kids on it, just like cattle […] *There is nothing to sit on… You got to sit on your bag… All those years they tried so hard to make us into white people, but the only time they succeeded was when we arrived at that school after 500 miles in the back of that truck… all covered in white dirt"* (Yukon Archives, Anglican Church, Diocese of Yukon fonds, 86/61, #477 and Clarke, 61).

> We were young children when we were pulled from our homes, our land and our loved ones. We were away at school for a long time; our parents became strangers to us over the years. At school we could not talk to each other in our own language, or laugh, or smile, or cry – we were silenced and were abused in many ways. We became ashamed of being 'Indian.' (Bullen (Blanchard), viii)

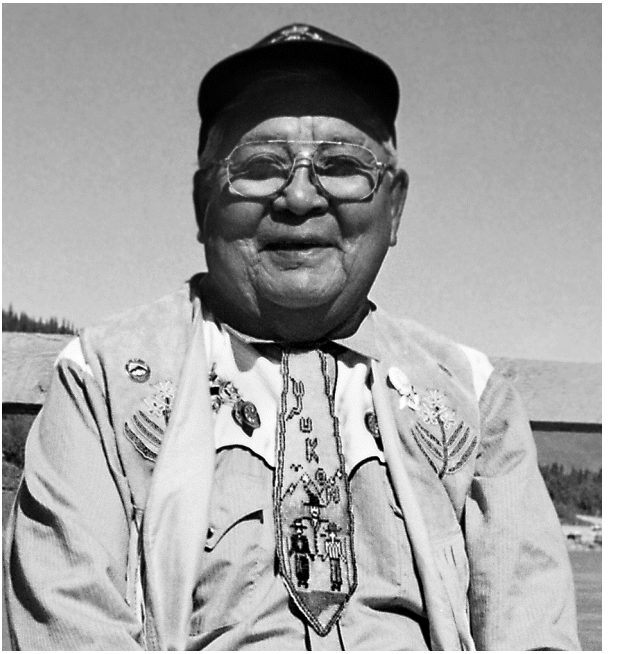
The Canadian government, in cooperation with the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches, instituted Indian Residential Schools in 1883 (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 5) with the intention of "civilizing" the children of Indigenous peoples. The government deemed it essential to separate the children from their families to ensure success. While a Yukon Indian residential school was established early in the twentieth century, few Hän children were sent there for any length of time in the first half of the twentieth century. However, in the 1950s the Anglican day school at Moosehide was closed and many Hän children were "scooped" and sent to distant

residential schools. The resulting social devastation undermined Hän culture, effectively separated children from their families and both from any place in the future.

The construction of the Alaska Highway and expanded air connections to the south dramatically ended the isolation of the Yukon from metropolitan Canada. In the 1950s and 60s many new mines and more towns were built. Government support included an expanded road network to support exploration and development and a vastly increased northern bureaucracy to survey, assess, manage and allocate lands and resources to maximize economic growth. Recreational hunting and fishing and commercial outfitting were privileged in new game regulations and First Nation subsistence activities were increasingly regarded as wasteful of meat. Percy Henry, a young Hän man during this time, noted the changes in his ability to make a living. The informal cash economy opportunities his father's generation had enjoyed in the 1920s and 30s were gone. It was no longer possible to just go off into the woods and cut fire wood to make a few dollars: "Regulation, regulation, regulation, halfway up to heaven. Every piece of land has a number on it" (Personal communication with Henry). Thus disconnected from the land, the Hän, unable to pursue their traditional land use practices, were separated from, and made to disappear in, the present.

Finally, the imposition of Canada's grand narrative, the historiographic Laurentian thesis and its physical manifestation, the Klondike Gold Rush commemorations of the 1950s and 60s, also deeply affected the Hän. The national grand narrative describing the creation of a modern industrial nation state is granted universal status. By its monopoly on agency, this narrative absorbs alternative accounts and justifies existing political structures and cultural mores (Macey, 25). The national historic sites in the Klondike region emphasize the technological evolution of mining method, the establishment and growth of government administration and, in the magnificent restoration of selected elements of the past, the propagation of the government's grand narrative. The absence of First Nation people is almost total, the only recognition comes to Keish (Skookum Jim), who, in the grand narrative, acted most like a white man by discovering the gold that started the rush (Cruikshank 1991, 134 and 1998, 155). The Hän, not a significant contributor to this grand narrative, were thus rendered invisible in the past. The early expectation of the Anglo-Saxon racialists was now fulfilled, the "Indians" had completely "melted away."

First Nation Revanche



Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Elder Percy Henry, with his beaded tie showing Chief Isaac welcoming and guiding the missionary, and with a wink, "you government fellows" into his traditional lands. (Neufeld, 2003, Dawson A4 Natl Abo Day meeting people 004a mod.).

Edward Said identifies this denial of history as a tool of imperialist power, seeking control over and creating an understanding of a foreign region. The creation of a past gives control over the present (Said, 66, 108-109). Thus, by denying northern Indigenous peoples their past, present and future, the national administration helped create and maintain the Metropolitan vision of an empty land (before their own settlement), one noting the Indigenous presence only as a contrast to the strengths of the immigrant population. Through its programs and policies the state regularized this absence of Indigenous people as the norm.

But the Hän had not disappeared. Organized as the Dawson Indian Band by the Department of Indian Affairs, they continued to live in the Klondike. And they continued the struggle to make themselves known and to regain their status as a people with agency. Having suffered a social and cultural reversal, as a result of settler "modernity", the Hän and the other Yukon Indian Bands drew on their skills and

knowledge to formulate a response. They also investigated the tools of the state attempting to crush them. Working together in the 1960s and 70s Yukon First Nations applied their traditional knowledge and diplomatic skills and also incorporated Western law and the concepts of Western justice as tools in a campaign of Revanche.[22] Their effective combination of these discourses resulted in a successful campaign to bring the Government of Canada to the negotiating table.

Yukon First Nations were willing to enter Canada but they wished to do it on their terms. Tolerance of their difference was not enough; Yukon First Nations wanted a new narrative of inclusion that acknowledged their power, knowledge, interests and agency. In 1972 the Yukon Native Brotherhood[23] prepared a statement of its position entitled *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow: A Statement of Grievances and an Approach to the Settlement by the Yukon Indian People* (Yukon Native Brotherhood). On 14 February 1973, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau met with Yukon Native Brotherhood representatives and accepted their submission as the basis for negotiations of a settlement. *Together Today for our Children Tomorrow* laid out a plan for a settlement to recognize Yukon First Nations as equal partners in the development of the territory's future.

Even as negotiations began, the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in continued to challenge the existing limitations of government regulations and worked to address the separations rendering them invisible. James Tully refers to such a dual strategy as the fight for freedom – making changes to be free, and the fight of freedom – acting as though there are no constraints (Tully 2000, 36-59). One of the most high profile actions of the fight for freedom was the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in recovery of Tr'ochëk, their traditional salmon fish camp at the Klondike River confluence with the Yukon River. The Hän had reluctantly left the site at the height of the gold rush in 1897. With the start of treaty negotiations in the 1970s the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in asked that the mining claims on the site (a form of Crown land lease) be cancelled, and the land set aside as part of their future agreement land selection. The federal government mining office refused this request. The First Nation consequently launched a law suit challenging Canada's right to alienate land, i.e. to issue mining claims, on lands unsurrendered by Indigenous peoples. For Canada this was a serious challenge. Most of the Canadian north and almost the entire province of British Columbia was unsurrendered land; that is, there were no treaties with the Indigenous peoples regularizing the state's power over and responsibility for land stewardship. The case had the potential to lead to the cancellation of all mining claims in these areas, seriously undermining the security of the Canadian mining industry.

The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in were not interested in shutting down the northern mining industry. They were concerned only with two mining claims. One was the claim at

22 Schivelbusch notes that in history victory is temporary and defeat "appears to be an inexhaustible wellspring of intellectual progress" (4). The defeated adopt a selection of the victor's tools, re-purposing them for their culturally-centred use.

23 McClellan summarizes the history of Yukon Indigenous organizations in the Yukon (99-104).

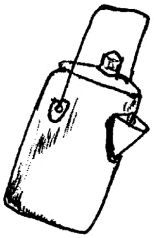
Tr'ochëk. They wanted their fish camp back. The other was a claim on nearby Bonanza Creek, the original discovery claim. Discovery Claim was the revelation that sparked the gold rush. The gold discovery there continues to be celebrated as the non-Indigenous Yukon's founding moment and the claim is where Canada commemorates its grand narrative of nation building. For the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, "discovery" means "the day [our] way of life began to disappear" (Yukon Native Brotherhood, 17). They wanted their way of life back. The nullification of Discovery Claim would make the story of the Newcomers, both those now "Locals" for a century, and the more recent Canadian northern story, illegitimate. Thus the northern gold rush epic and Canada's nation building narrative would be rendered invisible. Debbie Nagano, a Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in member of the Tr'ochëk management planning team, on her first visit to the site after the subsequent successful out-of-court settlement, said "Now we can take all this white man's junk and throw it in the river." (Personal communication with Nagano) Ultimately both the Hän and the "white man's" heritage were recognized by the First Nation. The site was also recognized by Canada as a national historic site. Tr'ochëk, as both a Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in heritage site and as a national historic site of Canada, commemorates the traditional life ways of the Hän on the Yukon River, the First Nation's successful challenge to Canada's assumptions of sovereignty, and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in inclusion in Canada on their own terms (Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, 20-21).

This community revival by the Tr'ondëk Hwech'in included their children. In the mid-1980s a group of Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in mothers urged their brothers (uncles are the traditional teachers) to take their children hunting. This activity was formalized by the community in the early 1990s and "First Hunt" is now an annual fall trip into the Tombstone Mountains where Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Local youth meet the migrating caribou. Hunter safety, firearms practice and environmental awareness exercises combine traditional and school lessons in this three-day event. The hunted animals are skinned, gutted and hung. A few weeks later the meat is prepared for a community feast where the new hunters, both First Nation and Local, share their luck and give thanks to the animals for giving themselves once again to the people. Subsequently First Fish, meeting the salmon in their mid-summer spawning run; Beaver Camp, early spring hunting and skinning of beaver; and Moose Camp, fall tanning of moose hide for clothing and gear, amongst other seasonal land activities, have been introduced as a contemporary adaptation of the traditional annual round. Youth from both cultures learn together how to live on the land. All of these activities are supported by Elders who share stories and advice, the staff of both the First Nation's government departments and Robert Service School help out and the Dawson unit of the Canadian Rangers[24] does the organizing and heavy lifting for

24 The Canadian Rangers are community-based military units of the Canadian Armed Forces Reserve. Their detachments are located in sparsely settled northern, coastal and isolated areas of Canada. Dawson City's Ranger patrol was the first, established in 1942 (Lackenbauer, 83).

the hunting camp. It is an extraordinary performance of cross-cultural sharing, instilling First Nation values and helping to build the kind of plural society that *Together Today for our Children Tomorrow* describes.

The Canada and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in governments signed their self-government agreement in summer 1998 at a Moosehide village potlatch ceremony. Like Chief Isaac's efforts in the early twentieth century, this potlatch explicitly forwarded a Hän narrative of First Nation sovereignty and gifted all of the attendees to cement their acknowledgement and recognition of the claims of the First Nation. In our family's annual Christmas letter I described my experience there:



Hanging on the wall of my office is a camp coffee pot. Suspended by the blue ribbon that wrapped it, the pot is a symbol of obligation, of connection. I received it from the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in this summer. The First Nation was celebrating their treaty with Canada and with all Newcomers, like us, who live in the Yukon. A big three-day potlatch was held at Moosehide village. Hundreds of visitors validated this event by witnessing the signing. We were rewarded with gifts. In this way we accepted an obligation to remember this important event and make it part of our history. And through this shared history we, both First Nations and Newcomers, are connected to each other. This is a reason to celebrate.

Conclusion

Most Yukon First Nations have now signed self-government agreements with Canada. These agreements identify the Canadian and Yukon governments as stewards of Yukon lands and resources. The agreements also establish a set of advisory bodies, with both First Nation and Local representatives to consider fish and wildlife, heritage, land use planning and other shared interests. These advisory bodies are to guide the government in the development and application of law and regulation. They are charged with minimizing conflicts and ensuring meaningful and respectful consultation with the Yukon people in the preparation of their advice.[25]

At this time the Government of the Yukon, Yukon First Nations, and a number of community groups are seeking clarification from the Supreme Court of Canada on the powers of these advisory bodies.[26] They wish to identify the balance between

25 Relevant chapters of the agreement include the creation of these boards and describe their responsibilities. (Canada, 1993)

26 Two recent cases shape this interpretation, a court case on the free staking regime for mine prospecting ("The Bell Tolls for Free Entry in Canada") and the land use planning for the Peel region of the northeastern Yukon "The Future of the Peel", *YCS Newsletter – Walking Softly Winter*, 2012.

stated political positions and objectives supported by the election process, the British democratic institutions that inspired the Anglo-Saxon identity, and the necessity of accepting the advice of the Umbrella Final Agreement bodies and their public consultation processes that draw on public thought on specific aspects of future planning, the institution of First Nation consensus building. The relationship performances between the two cultures, the subject of cultural cartography, seeks to ensure the recognition of and respect for the decision-making mechanisms of both cultures. The present legal challenges indicate the uncertainty amongst Yukoners about how this recognition and respect for both democratic leadership and community consensus can be implemented. Both cultures have equal roles in the determination of who owns this place, its past, its present and its future. Governance needs to respond sensitively and appropriately to the cultural pluralism expressed in both *Together Today for our Children Tomorrow* and the self-government agreements if the ideals of these cultures are to be fulfilled.

On a positive note, the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in accepted the responsibility to lead the community consultation for the Tr'ondëk-Klondike World Heritage Site nomination. The First Nation has undertaken extensive community consultations in preparing an inclusive, culturally pluralistic story of the Tr'ondëk-Klondike. The nomination, focused on the First Nation's subsistence salmon fishery and the Newcomer's globalized placer gold mining, promises to equitably tell the story of the Tr'ondëk-Klondike. This process is just one element of the ongoing conversation that started well over a century ago and continues in the present. The distinctive First Nation cultural knowledge of northwestern Canada has retained its character and content. Yukon First Nations continue to forward their interests through interventions – humorous, forceful, oral, literary, legal, and diplomatic – using both their own knowledge and by selectively, and carefully (Willow, 882-883), referencing the morality of the Western cultural narrative and drawing upon its tools to re-enforce their position. There is some progress in the practical acknowledgement of cultural pluralism. In the community of Dawson, Locals and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in work together on building their regional future. Canada's 1993 Agreement with Yukon First Nations describes a pluralistic approach to decision-making. Conversations about decision-making take place between cultural narratives. There remain serious difficulties in understanding the implications of the Agreement but there are mechanisms that prevent either side from abandoning the conversation. Yukon First Nations and non-Indigenous Yukoners have to work their way through the difficulties. The contemporary "Mapping the Way" publicity campaign[27], about the implementation of the Yukon First Nations' agreements, suggests Yukoners are accepting a broader and

27 The "Mapping the Way" campaign website provides details on present initiatives while the video *Mapping the Way: Yukon First Nation Self-Government* (2013) includes many of the people who have helped educate the author.

more inclusive set of cultural narratives and recognizing Indigenous knowledges to guide them into the future.

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Wolfgang Klooß

Métissage: Vom Historismus zur indigenen Historiographie

Die kanadischen Métis im Wandel der Geschichtsschreibung*

Abstract

Regardless of a small number of respective works, the treatment of the Canadian Métis in academic discourse has largely rested on non-native scholarship. This holds not least true for historiographic accounts which have been highly instrumental in the construction of Métis images and the dissemination of Métis representations in the academy and beyond. With the emergence of a more profound native scholarship during the last three decades, especially in recent years, and the application of indigenous forms of knowledge, traditional historicist narratives have been contested by methodologies and findings rooted in native and communal traditions, so that foremost macro-historical or biographical explanations are complemented if not replaced by local forms of reading Métis history.

Looking at a few selected works, this paper tries to reveal some of the shifts in paradigm and tries to identify some of the consequences for the study of peoples that went as Bois-Brulées, Half Breeds, Scorched-Wood People, One-and-a Half Men, Métis. *Moreover, it pleads for a serious integration of Indigenous knowledge in the academy in order to provide for a less hegemonial, decolonized, synergetic form of scholarship.*

Résumé

En dehors de quelques publications, la présence des métis canadiens dans les discours scientifiques se limite avant tout à des études non autochtones. Ceci est surtout le cas pour les travaux réalisés dans le domaine historiographique qui ont été un instrument essentiel dans la construction des images des métis et de la propagation de leurs représentations dans le monde académique et au-delà. Avec l'émergence de recherches autochtones plus approfondies pendant les trois dernières décennies, surtout ces dernières années, et par l'application des types de savoirs autochtones, les discours traditionnellement historicistes furent contestés par des méthodologies et des résultats enracinés dans des traditions autochtones et communautaires, de sorte que les principales expli-

* Einige der folgenden Ausführungen und Formulierungen sind zwei früheren Studien des Verfassers entlehnt (siehe Klooß 1989 u. 2011).

cations macro-historiques ou biographiques sont complétées, voire substituées, par des formes locales de la lecture de l'histoire des métis.

En prenant en considération quelques travaux sélectionnés, cet article cherche à révéler quelques-uns des changements du paradigme et à identifier quelques-unes des conséquences pour l'étude des peuples connus sous le nom de Bois-Brulées, Half Breeds, Scorched-Wood People, One-and-a Half Men, Métis. *En plus, elle plaide pour une intégration sérieuse des savoirs autochtones dans le monde académique afin d'établir une sorte de recherche scientifique moins hégémonique, décolonisées et synergétique.*

Am 26. Juni 2010 erschien in der *Frankfurter Rundschau* ein Artikel des Journalisten Gerd Braune, der diese Teilüberschrift enthielt: "Zum ersten Mal wird auf das gehört, was Inuit erzählen" (Braune 2010, o.S.). Es ging dabei um die Bedeutung, die kanadische Wissenschaftler heutzutage bei ihren neuerlichen Bemühungen, die während John Franklins letzter Arktisreise (1845) verschollenen Expeditionsschiffe *Erebus* und *Terror* zu finden, dem in mündlichen Texten überlieferten Wissen der ortsansässigen Inuit zubilligen (vgl. auch Rondeau 2010). Ungeachtet des Tatbestands, dass möglicherweise erst die als Folge des Klimawandels zu verzeichnende Eisschmelze den Franklins Schicksal umgebenden Mythos entschleiern wird, verweist der gezielte Rückgriff auf indigenes Wissen auf einen grundlegenden Paradigmenwechsel im Forschungsdesign, der auch auf anderen Gebieten zu beobachten ist und im Folgenden mittels einer knappen, überblicksartigen Betrachtung der historiographischen Aufarbeitung der kanadischen Métis skizziert werden soll.

Letztere werden dabei ganz bewusst auf die Métis-Populationen am Red River und in Saskatchewan – also auf jene Bevölkerungsgruppen, die maßgeblich auf die politische und ökonomische Entwicklung des kanadischen Westens im 19. Jahrhundert einwirkten – eingegrenzt.[1] Die sich aus Artikel 35.2 des *Loi constitutionelle de 1982* und dann vor allem aus der sogenannten *Powley Decision* (2003) ergebenden Konsequenzen für Métis-spezifische Statusdefinitionen (vgl. Adams/Dahl/Peach 2013)[2] oder auch das u.a. von Devrim Karahasan (2007) vorgestellte Konzept der Métis als nicht nur im Umfeld und innerhalb der territorialen Grenzen des Pelzhan-

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1 Im Jahr 1831 belief sich die lokale Bevölkerung auf 2417, neun Jahre später auf 4369 Personen. Der erste Bundeszensus von 1871 nennt dann 5720 französischsprachige und 4080 englischsprachige Métis sowie 1600 weiße Siedler (siehe Stanley 1963, 13).

2 Im *Constitution Act* wurden neben den *First Nations* und Inuit auch die Métis als indigene Bevölkerungsgruppe(n) anerkannt und von ihnen eingeforderte Rechte verfassungsmäßig garantiert. Die als *Powley Decision* publik gewordene, in letzter Instanz vom Obersten Gerichtshof Kanadas verabschiedete Entscheidung bestätigt métis-spezifische Forderungen wie das Recht auf freie Jagd innerhalb angestammter Gebietsgrenzen und legt Kriterien für métis-spezifische Statusdefinitionen fest.

dels erwachsene ethnogenetische "Vielheiten"[3] werden im Rahmen der hier vorgebrachten Überlegungen nur randständige Berücksichtigung finden. Eine Problematisierung der Begriffszuweisung wird nicht erfolgen.[4] Auch wenn derartige Einschränkungen die Gefahr der Reduktion in sich bergen, sind sie unausweichlich, um überhaupt kohärent und trennscharf argumentieren zu können. Während der im Titel ausgewiesene Begriff der Métissage eigentlich auf eine Entwicklung deutet, die jenseits biologistischer Erläuterungen als "a syncretistic process of cultural, social and political encounter of different ethnic groups" (Karahasan 2009, 7) verstanden worden ist, wird Métissage im Rahmen der folgenden Ausführungen im übertragenen Sinn, d.h. konzeptionell, verwendet.

Zunächst einmal gilt es, in aller Kürze jene für das 19. Jahrhundert relevanten Fakten, Daten und Gestalten zu rekapitulieren, die für die Herausbildung und Entwicklung der sogenannten *New Nation*, einer von den Métis des Red River-Territoriums selbst gewählten Zuschreibung, und deren Widerstand gegen die eingeborene Landrechte ignorierende Siedlungspolitik Ottawas anzuführen sind. Sofern ausschließlich schriftliche Quellen bemüht werden, wären hier aus métis-nationalistischer Perspektive die *Battle of Seven Oaks* (1816), der "Sayer-Prozess" von 1849, wohl auch die *Battle of Grand Coteau* (1851) herauszustellen.[5] Als prominente Akteure rückten Cuthbert Grant, Louis Riel und Gabriel Dumont in den Vordergrund. Insbesondere die *Battle of Seven Oaks*, die nicht zuletzt in einem weit verbreiteten *folk song* des Métis-Poeten Pierre Falcon thematisiert wird, wie später auch die *Manitoba Resistance* (1869/70) und vor allem die *Northwest Rebellion* (1885) sind wie auch die genannten Protagonisten im kollektiven Gedächtnis der Métis, aber auch der übrigen Bevölkerung des kanadischen Westens verhaftet geblieben und haben mithin langfristige Wirkung gezeitigt.

Einblick in die Ereignisse geben vornehmlich Darstellungen aus der nicht-indigenen Forschung und dem breiten Spektrum journalistischer und literarischer Werke, insbesondere die vielen historischer Romane, die die Geschichte des kanadischen Westens zum Gegenstand haben. Als nur partiell alphabetisierte und zudem

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3 Karahasan entlehnt diesen Begriff weitgehend unkommentiert den diskursanalytischen Überlegungen Foucaults (vgl. Foucault 1987).

4 In der Sprache der Cree werden die Métis etwa als "Otepayemsuak", als "independent ones" bezeichnet. Vgl. zur Handhabung der Nomenklatur auch St-Onge et al. (eds.) 2014, xxix; Podruchny/Peers 2010, xi.

5 Métis-Aktivisten verlagern die Herausbildung métis-nationalistischer Bewusstseinsformen bereits in das frühe 17. Jahrhundert. (Vgl. hierzu Karahasan 2005, 133) Die in die kanadische Militärgeschichtsschreibung auch als *Massacre of Seven Oaks* eingegangene Attacke lokaler Métis gegen das *Red River Settlement* endete mit einem Sieg der Métis, brachte aber auch 21 Siedlern den Tod. Mit der Begnadigung des Métis-*Free Trader* Pierre-Guillaume Sayer, der das Pelzhandelsmonopol der Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) missachtet hatte, wurde das Monopol der HBC endgültig gebrochen. Aus Sicht der Métis-Historiographie gelang den Métis in der *Battle of Grand Coteau* ein wichtiger Sieg über die Sioux, der es ihnen erlaubte, "sich als 'masters of the plains' […] zu etablieren" (Karahasan 2005, 134-135).

auch innerhalb der Grenzen der Prärieregionen ungemein heterogene Mischethnie (siehe u.a. Pannekoek 1991) hinterlassen die Métis des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts selbst lediglich Teilspuren im kanadischen Schrifttum. Es sind ihre wenigen gebildeten Eliten mit Repräsentanten wie Louis Riel (1844-1885) und Louis Schmidt (1844-1935), dem Sekretär des ersten *Provisional Government* der Métis, die sich in unterschiedlichen Gattungsformaten – darunter politische Traktate, Petitionen, staatsrechtliche Abhandlungen, aber auch lyrische Texte – artikulieren. Daneben findet sich eine Reihe von Erzählungen und Anekdoten aus dem mündlichen Traditionsgut der Métis, die überliefert sind und partiell auch historische Begebenheiten dokumentieren (siehe u.a. Sealey 1973; Sinclair/Cariou 2011).

Letztere, wie auch die fiktionalen Arbeiten europäischer und nordamerikanischer Autoren bleiben bei den folgenden Einlassungen allerdings ausgespart, soll der Fokus doch vornehmlich auf einschlägige historiographische Studien gerichtet werden. Diese entstammen zunächst mehr oder weniger ausschließlich der Feder amerikanischer, englischer, französischer, vor allem aber auch anglo- und frankokanadischer Autoren. Erste Arbeiten entstehen im ausgehenden 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert und umfassen u.a. Texte von Adolphe Quimet, George Taylor Denison, Fergus Black oder auch Auguste Trémaudan.[6]

Quimet überschreibt sein Werk zwar *La Vérité sur la Question Métisse au Nord-Ouest* (1889), impliziert mit der Titelwahl aber bereits den prätentiösen Charakter seiner Darlegungen, die ein eher wirklichkeitsfremdes, romantisch verklärtes Bild der Métis entwerfen und einem "rather sentimental cult of the primitive innocent" (Woodcock 1976, 245) huldigen. In der Analyse ebenfalls verkürzt stellt sich Trémaudans *L'Histoire de la Nation Métisse* (abgeschlossen 1929, erstmals publiziert 1936) dar, die hauptsächlich wegen ihres emotionalen Engagements für die Métis, das im Quebecer Hintergrund des Autors gründet und mit der Forderung nach einer französischen Präsenz im kanadischen Westen verbunden wird, Erwähnung verdient. Zugleich spiegelt das sehr subjektiv gefärbte Werk die enge Verbundenheit Trémaudans mit der *Union Nationale Métisse* wider.[7] Unter den Arbeiten des ausgehenden 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhunderts finden sich im Übrigen auch solche, die dokumentieren, wie sehr historische und biographische Abhandlungen zum Abbild ideologischer und politischer Interessen geraten können. Sie verdienen dennoch die Aufmerksamkeit der Forschung, da sie aufgrund der zeitlichen Nähe zu den Ereignissen die emotionale Atmosphäre der Epoche anschaulich wiederzugeben wissen. Bei-

6 Später gesellen sich Untersuchungen so einflussreicher Historiker, Sozial- und Politikwissenschaftler wie George F.G. Stanley (1936; 1963), Arthur S. Morton (1939), Marcel Giraud (1945), Joseph Kinsey Howard (1952), William L. Morton (1957), Hartwell Bowsfield (1971), Desmond Morton (1972), Thomas Flanagan (1976; 1979; 1983; 1991), George Woodcock (1976), R.M. Lower (1977), Douglas Owram (1980), Thomas Berger (1981), Gerald Friesen (1987; 1996; 1999) oder George Melnyk (1992) hinzu, um nur einige prominente Namen anzuführen.

7 Seit 1982 liegt das Werk, von Elizabeth Maguet ins Englische übertragen, unter dem Titel *Hold High Your Heads* vor.

spielhaft sichtbar wird dies an George Taylor Denisons *The Struggle for Imperial Unity* (1909), das wie etwa Fergus Blacks *Saskatchewan and the Old Northwest* (1913) noch ganz im Gedankengut des britischen Imperialismus verhaftet ist und ein Bild der Métis zeichnet, das auch in einigen der bei der zeitgenössischen Leserschaft so beliebten Abenteuer- und Geschichtsromanzen anzutreffen ist. Romane wie Joseph Edmund Collins' *The Story of Louis Riel, the Rebel Chief* (1885) oder sein Jugendbuch *Annette, the Métis Spy. A Heroine of the Northwest Rebellion* (1886) geben hiervon stellvertretend Zeugnis. Damit ergänzen sich historische Darstellung und populäre Fiktion, präsentieren sie doch ganz ähnliche, vorurteilsbelastete Deutungsmuster.

Von ganz anderem Zuschnitt erweisen sich dann die wegweisenden Publikationen George F.G. Stanleys, Arthur S. Mortons, Marcel Girauds und der folgenden Historikergenerationen, die in ihren Forschungsansätzen wiederum nur exemplarisch vorgestellt werden können. Die *Manitoba Resistance* und die *Northwest Rebellion* werden von Stanley erstmals in den allgemeinen Kontext der Auseinandersetzung um die *frontier* und die Eroberung des Westens gerückt. Der spätere Lieutenant Governor von New Brunswick und Generalherausgeber der *Collected Writings of Louis Riel/Les Ecrits complets de Louis Riel* (1985) hebt damit vor allem den gesellschaftlichen Antagonismus hervor, der sich parallel zur Westbewegung entwickelte. Der *frontier*-Schule sind auch Morton und Giraud zuzuordnen. *Le Métis Canadien* (1945) zum Beispiel, dem zweibändigen, sozial- bzw. familiengeschichtlich angelegten Werk des französischen Historikers Giraud, liegt eine ungemein detaillierte ethnographische Lesart der Präriegeschichte zugrunde, die darauf abzielt, die Einzigartigkeit der Métis als Volk hervorzuheben und ihnen den Status einer eigenständigen Nation zuzuerkennen. Es wird allerdings ein sehr negatives Bild der Métis vermittelt, das diesen eine vermeintliche Unterlegenheit gegenüber den weißen Siedlern attestiert, die rassentheoretisch mit der genetischen Vermischung von Indigenen und Europäern begründet wird. Der Métis-Historiker Antoine S. Lussier hat zudem angemerkt, "[that Giraud] is sometimes inaccurate […], attributing cultural elements to [the Métis] that resemble more closely the traditions of the Western Indians" (Lussier 1982, xxxiii).

Während in diesen Studien – vielleicht abgesehen von Girauds Beitrag – vorrangig die übergreifenden historischen Zusammenhänge aufgearbeitet werden und die Person Louis Riels vergleichsweise geringe Beachtung findet, verfolgt der Amerikaner Joseph Kinsey Howard – wie schon der Titel seiner Arbeit: *Strange Empire. Louis Riel and the Métis People* (1952) nahelegt – von Beginn an auch biographische Fragestellungen, verbindet Ereignis- mit Personengeschichte und bereitet den Weg für biographische Forschungen, wie sie dann von Stanley, Bowsfield, Woodcock und Flanagan vorgelegt werden. Darüber hinaus setzt Howard neue Akzente, indem er die amerikanischen Interessen an Manitoba und die Aktivitäten der beiden Annexionisten James Wicks Taylor und Enos Stutsman nachzeichnet. Auch die Bedeutung von Gabriel Dumont wird von Howard in der ihn kennzeichnenden, d.h. für die Métis parteiergreifenden Weise herausgearbeitet. Dieses Signum ist auch Wood-

cocks Dumont-Biographie eigen, die den Jäger, Fährmann und späteren militärischen Kopf der Métis während der *Northwest Rebellion* in einer ausgeprägt narrativen Darstellung heroisch proportioniert. Einen anderen lebensgeschichtlichen Ansatz wählt der Politikwissenschaftler Thomas Flanagan, der in *Louis* '*David*' *Riel,* '*Prophet of the New World*' (1979) vor allem den religiösen Vorstellungen und Obsessionen Riels nachgeht. In methodischer Hinsicht fällt auf, dass Flanagan stärker als andere vor ihm auf Riels (literarische) Selbstaussagen rekurriert und den Métis-Führer auch als Lyriker zeigt, dessen *Poésies religieuses et politiques* (1979) sowie *Poésies de jeunesse* (1977) partiell als Spiegel seines Innenlebens begriffen werden. Aus der Analyse von Riels Gedankenwelt wird ein theoretisches Konzept entwickelt, wonach Riels religiöse Visionen als Beispiel einer aus der Geschichte indigener Widerstandsbewegungen bekannten Millenien-Lehre zu gelten haben, die zur kollektiven Identitätsbestärkung beiträgt und im Hinblick auf das Selbstverständnis einer assimilationsgefährdeten Mischethnie wie der Métis eine Schutzfunktion übernehmen kann (vgl. Lantenari 2003, Martell 1984).

In einer späteren Arbeit wendet sich Flanagan nochmals dem Widerstand der eingeborenen Präriebevölkerung von 1885 zu, den er, aus rein legalistischer Perspektive argumentierend, für unzulässig erklärt (Flanagan 1983), ebenso wie er dann in einer vom *Department of Justice* beauftragten Studie von der *Manitoba Métis Federation* (MMF) und dem *Native Council of Canada* (NCC) erhobene Gebietsansprüche zurückweist (Flanagan1991).[8] Flanagans Argumentation ist Thomas Berger, der schon in *Fragile Freedoms* (1981) seine Sympathien für die Métis offengelegt hatte, als Anwalt der MMF und NCC entschieden entgegengetreten.[9] In *The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America* (2012) kommentiert Thomas King Flanagans Position in der Frage indigener Rechte und Landansprüche wie folgt:

> Flanagan has little patience with treaties and Native Status, and has argued vigorously, in his role as educator and as an advisor to Prime Minister Stephen Harper, for the dissolution of Indian reserves and federal Status. "Call it assimilation, call it integration, call it adaptation", says Flanagan, "call it whatever you want: it has to happen."

8 MMF und NCC hatten versucht, die Provinz von Manitoba und die kanadische Regierung auf kompensatorische Landzuweisungen zu verklagen, waren den Métis doch 1870 beim Eintritt Manitobas in die kanadische Konföderation Gebietsansprüche zuerkannt, in der Folge aber nie eingelöst worden.

9 Thomas Berger knüpft argumentativ an die Studie von R.M. Lower, *Colony to Nation: A History of Canada* (1977) an, in der die These vertreten wird, man habe den Métis ihre angestammten Landansprüche verweigert und es sei deshalb zu den Auseinandersetzungen am Red River und in Saskatchewan gekommen. Klare Position zugunsten der Métis beziehen auch John W. Friesen und Virginia Lyons Friesen in *We Are Included! The Métis People of Canada Realize Riel's Vision* (2004).

> Adherents to Flanagan's particular vision for Indians in the 21st century are adamant that Aboriginals should not be entitled to self-determination to any degree, in any form, nor should they receive federal funding or qualify for special tax exemptions. Closing down the Department of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Indian affairs, they contend, would save billions of dollars a year. (King 2012, 199)

Aus dem umfangreichen Kanon der im letzten Drittel des 20. Jahrhunderts entstandenen Métis- und Prärie-Studien verdienen die Untersuchungen Doug Owrams, Gerald Friesens und George Melnyks besondere Erwähnung, warten sie doch mit alternativen, ideen- und regionalgeschichtlichen Forschungsperspektiven auf. In *Promise of Eden* (1980) widmet sich Owram etwa der Programmatik der politischen Kräfte, die einer forcierten Besiedlung des Westens das Wort redeten. Dank seines ideologiekritischen Erkenntnisinteresses befasst er sich eingehend mit den kanadischen Expansionisten und der britisch-nationalistisch orientierten *Canada-First*-Bewegung, deren Vertreter im direkten Kontext der Métis-Rebellionen von 1869-1870 und 1885 immer wieder in Erscheinung getreten sind. Im Mittelpunkt der Arbeit steht der Wandel, dem das Bild des Westens unterzogen wurde, so dass aus der unwirtlichen Weite der Prärien ein neuer „Garten Eden" für den kanadischen Osten erwachsen konnte. Owram legt damit den ideengeschichtlichen Rahmen fest, innerhalb dessen die divergierenden Vorstellungen von den Prärien im 19. Jahrhundert angesiedelt waren, d.h. er analysiert die imperiale Ideologie Kanadas in ihren Auswirkungen auf den Westen und seine Bewohner. In Fortschreibung der provinzgeschichtlich ausgerichteten Monographie W.L. Mortons *Manitoba. A History* aus dem Jahr 1957 richten dann auch Friesen und Melnyk in den 1990er Jahren ihr Augenmerk auf regionale Fragestellungen, gehen also, wie zuvor schon Barry Cooper, dem konfliktgeladenen Verhältnis zwischen westlicher Peripherie und östlichem Zentrum nach, in dessen Spannungsfeld die Métis-Geschichte von Manitoba und Saskatchewan steht. Entsprechend liest Melnyk die politisch formativen Ereignisse des mittleren und späten 19. Jahrhunderts als Ausdruck von Protestbewegungen gegen die hegemoniale Dominanz Ottawas.

Die soweit vorgestellten Entwicklungstendenzen in der Métis-Historiographie[10] reflektieren mehr oder weniger uneingeschränkt ein makro-geschichtliches Forschungsdesign und präsentieren sich weitgehend als Ergebnis einer ereignis- und personengeschichtlich ausgerichteten Vorgehensweise. Dies verweist auf ein Ge-

10 In einem 2005 unter dem Titel "Die politische Formierung der kanadischen Metis zur Nation im 19. Jahrhundert" vorgelegten Aufsatz greift Karahasan auf einen Teil der genannten Arbeiten zurück, die vergleichend zu Rate gezogen, deren Befunde nicht nur referiert, sondern wiederholt auch problematisiert werden. Auf indigene geschichtswissenschaftliche Studien wird allerdings nur spärlich rekurriert, mündliche Quellen oder narrative Darstellungen bleiben unberücksichtigt. So bietet der Aufsatz nicht zuletzt auch eine im Wesentlichen thematisch ausgerichtete Zusammenschau von für die verfolgte Fragestellung relevanten Werken.

schichtskonzept und eine Geschichtsschreibung, die ihre Wurzeln im Historismus haben.[11] Als disziplinäre Matrix operiert der Historismus mit einem Objektivitätsanspruch, der im Quellenstudium fundiert ist. Gleichzeitig bedient er sich eines hermeneutischen Verfahrens bei der Entschlüsselung der Quellen. Zudem besteht sein Beitrag „zur Entwicklung eines fachwissenschaftlichen Paradigmas der Geschichtswissenschaft in seiner Auffassung von der historischen Methode als Regelsystem der Forschung […], während die ihn kennzeichnende Darstellungsform […] diejenige einer großen, breit angelegten epischen Erzählung [ist]" (Jaeger/Rüsen 1992, 48-49, 49)[12], die in einer entsprechenden *master narrative* oder in mehreren *grands récits* (siehe Lyotard 1979) mündet. Hinsichtlich der übergreifenden Werke der klassischen Métis-Historiographie ist kritisch zu konstatieren, dass indigene Quellen, d.h. vor allem auch mündliche sowie Zeugnisse materieller Kultur wie Kleidung, Musik, Fahnen und Flaggen (siehe Racette et al. 1987), kaum in den Deutungsprozess integriert werden und Einblick in die kulturellen Praktiken der First Nations und der Bevölkerungsgruppen, die in der Ära der Kontaktnahme entstanden, nicht angemessen gewährt wird. In ähnlicher Weise haben auch genderspezifische Problemstellungen lange Zeit auf der Liste der Desiderata gestanden, bis schließlich Anfang der 1980er Jahre Jennifer Brown und dann insbesondere Sylvia van Kirk in ihren wegweisenden Untersuchungen die soziale und wirtschaftliche Rolle der Frauen im Pelzhandel aufgearbeitet haben.

Mittlerweile bietet sich allerdings ein anderes Bild, haben indigene Beiträge doch viele neue Erkenntnisse bereitgestellt und so nicht nur ergänzend, sondern auch korrigierend gewirkt. Neubetrachtungen der Métis-Geschichte finden sich u.a. in autobiographisch-fiktionalen Werken wie Maria Campbells *Halfbreed. A Proud and Bitter Canadian Legacy* (1973) oder Beatrice Culletons *In Search of April Raintree* (1983) (siehe Klooss 1990; Jannetta 2001) sowie der stetig gewachsenen Zahl einschlägiger geschichtswissenschaftlicher Abhandlungen "[which, following Campbell,] address the importance of storytelling for transgenerational knowledge transmission […]" (Lutz 2012, 137). Diese Entwicklung spiegelt auch den gewachsenen Einfluss politischer Organisationen wie der *Association of Métis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan*, der *Manitoba Métis Federation* oder des *Native Council of Canada* wider, in deren Auftragsarbeiten eine revidierte Sicht der indigenen Geschichte Kanadas angeboten wird.[13] Dass Auftragsforschung nicht immer unparteiisch bleibt, versteht sich von selbst. Das Gleiche gilt freilich ebenso für vermeintlich

11 In der angelsächsischen Welt ist der Historismus eng mit den Forschungen Robin George Collingwoods (1889-1943) verbunden.

12 Stanleys und Girauds übergreifenden Werke könnten stellvertretend für ein historistisches Wissenschaftsparadigma angeführt werden.

13 Emile Pelletiers *A Social History of the Manitoba* Métis (1974), D. Bruce Sealeys und Antoine S. Lussiers *The Métis. Canada's Forgotten People* (1975) wie auch der von der *Association of Métis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan* kommissionierte Band *Louis Riel. Justice Must Be Done* (1979) geben hiervon Zeugnis.

objektive Abhandlungen etablierter Wissenschaftler (vgl. etwa Howard 1952 oder Flanagan 1983, 1991).

Aus wissenschaftsgeschichtlicher Perspektive bemerkenswert ist die inzwischen deutlich gewachsene Zahl von Métis-Historikern, die sich in ihren Arbeiten auffällig oft von ethnogenetisch, genealogie- und kommunalgeschichtlich fundierten Forschungsmatrizen leiten lassen. Während die politisch wegweisenden Ereignisse aus der Métis-Geschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts in jenen Zeitraum fallen, in dem sich in Europa der Historismus herausbildete, findet der aktuelle 'ethnic turn in Aboriginal Studies' im Gefolge einer linguistischen und zugleich postmodernen Wende in der Historiographie statt, die nicht zuletzt im Einklang mit den Forschungen Hayden Whites (siehe White 1973, 1987, 2010) und seiner Gefolgschaft steht und vermeintliche historistische Wahrheiten einer ernsthaften Prüfung unterzogen hat. Im Folgenden soll die neue Métis-Historiographie anhand zweier Fallbeispiele kurz skizziert und für indigene Studien typischen methodischen Ansätzen nachgegangen werden. Stellvertretend mögen hierüber zunächst die von Diane Paulette Payment in *The Free People – Otipemisiwak, Batoche, Saskatchewan 1870-1930* (1990) vorgestellten Überlegungen Auskunft geben.

Payment konzentriert sich in ihrer Untersuchung auf die kleine Métis-Gemeinde Batoche in Saskatchewan – Schauplatz der für den Ausgang der *Northwest Rebellion* entscheidenden militärischen Auseinandersetzungen und zudem ein mentalitätsgeschichtlich insofern besonders signifikanter Ort, "[as it] lies at the core of the Métis identity in Western Canada" (Racette 1991, o.S.). Payments Ziel ist es, mit Hilfe schriftlicher und mündlicher Zeugnisse einen neuen umfassenderen Einblick in die Kommunalgeschichte innerhalb einer überschaubaren Zeitspanne zu gewähren. Der eigentliche Erkenntnisgewinn speist sich aus der Einbeziehung und Auswertung mündlicher Quellen, sind diese doch nur bedingt zugänglich oder, wie Calvin Racette betont:

> To write of this place takes courage, diligence and respect. The people living in that area are not entirely willing to pass on the stories that they have heard from their parents and grandparents. These stories are personal, they are of their forefathers and heroes. To gain access to this history requires someone special, someone who will treat the stories with respect and place the history into a qualitative context where it can be understood and appreciated. (Racette 1991, o.S.)

Eine entscheidende Voraussetzung für die Vertrauensbildung markiert dabei die (sozio)linguistische Kompetenz des Wissenschaftlers, d.h. sein Zugang zu den Varianten des Michif (siehe Bakker 1997). Unter den schriftlichen Dokumenten kommt den Kirchenbüchern eine wichtige Funktion zu, geben sie doch über die in Batoche beheimateten Familien Auskunft, einem für Payments Studie zentralen Untersuchungsgegenstand: "The society that we see at the turn of the century was one

where the family and culture assisted in the identity of its members as Métis […]" (Payment 1990, 11). Familiäre Interaktionsmuster und ihre Bedeutung für den täglichen Überlebenskampf werden ebenso herausgearbeitet wie die zwiespältige Rolle des Klerus, dessen Verhalten gleichermaßen vorurteilsbehaftet wie paternalistisch war, dessen Vertreter andererseits aber die einzigen waren, "to support the Métis before governmental or other outside agencies" (Payment 1990, 131).[14] Insgesamt kommt Payment das Verdienst zu, in ihrem Werk mit der von Stanley und Giraud vorgebrachten, so lange unbestrittenen These aufgeräumt zu haben, die Métis seien kulturell unterlegen gewesen und deshalb gegenüber den weißen Siedlern ökonomisch ins Hintertreffen geraten.

Die für Payments Arbeit charakteristische kommunal-, alltags- und familiengeschichtliche Perspektive wird in neueren Sammelbänden und Einzelstudien fortgeschrieben (vgl. etwa Gagnon/Combet/Gaboury-Diallo 2009; Podruchny/Peers 2010; St-Onge/Podruchny/Mcdougall 2014) und hat eine weitere Vertiefung in Brenda Macdougalls *One of the Family. Metis Culture in Nineteenth-Century Northwestern Saskatchewan* (2010) erfahren. Welche Ergebnisse solche Forschungsansätze zeitigen, soll mittels einer etwas detaillierteren Betrachtung von Mcdougalls Monographie dargelegt werden.

In *One of the Family* wartet die Autorin mit einem Familienkonzept auf, das unter dem Begriff *wahkootowin*, einem Terminus aus der Sprache der Cree, firmiert und eine holistische Weltsicht beinhaltet:

> As an integral facet of an Aboriginal worldview, *wahkootowin* is a concept that is invoked in ceremonies, prayer, and daily conversation. However the term did not appear in any of the historical records used in this study. Rather, I encountered it in spiritual teachings about family first imparted to me by Metis elder Maria Campbell [… It is a worldview] that privileged relatedness to land, people (living, ancestral, and those to come), the spirit world, and creatures inhabiting the space. In short, this worldview, *wahkootowin*, is predicated upon a specific Aboriginal notion and definition of family as a broadly conceived sense of relatedness with all beings, human and non-human, living and dead, physical and spiritual.[15] (Macdougall 2010, XII, 3)

Gegenstand der Untersuchung ist der Geburtsort von Louis Riel Sr., die kleine Métis-Gemeinde Île à la Crosse (Sakitawak) im English River District, der als zweitältesten Kommune Saskatchewans siedlungsgeschichtlich und ethnogenetisch besondere Bedeutung zukommt. Hier errichtete die Hudson's Bay Company einen

14 Diese partiell positive Sicht auf den Klerus steht im Widerspruch zur radikalen Kirchenkritik, die Howard Adams in *Prison of Grass* (1975) vornimmt.

15 Vgl. hierzu auch Neil MacLeod, *Cree Narrative Memory: From Treaties to Contemporary Times* (2007).

ihrer ersten Handelsposten im Nordwesten. Hier kam es zur Métissage zwischen französischen *coureurs de bois* und einheimischen Cree-Frauen, die sich in Sakitawak ansiedelten, so dass der Ort für die Métis mit einem Gründungsmythos verbunden ist und – ähnlich wie Batoche – zu einem symbolischen Zentrum erwachsen konnte. Im Rückgriff auf eine weniger chronologisch denn systematisch angelegte Vorgehensweise beschreibt und analysiert Macdougall diese Region Saskatchewans als gesellschaftlichen Raum im Grenzgebiet zwischen Cree und Dene, geht auf die soziale Zusammensetzung der Métis-Familien ein, weist patronymische Verbindungen im kanadischen Nordwesten nach und wendet sich Fragen der Akkulturation und der Bedeutung des Katholizismus zu. Unter den Kapitelüberschriften finden sich Titel wie "Family, Labour and the HBC", "Competition, Freemen, and Contested Spaces" oder "Freemen to Free Traders in the Northwest Fur Trade". Im dritten Abschnitt wird zum Beispiel die Verlässlichkeit vieler Reiseberichte in Frage gestellt, unterlägen diese doch einer maskulinen Sicht auf den Métis-Alltag und vermittelten ein inadäquates, romantisiertes Gesellschaftsbild:

> Notions of Métis culture have relied on highly descriptive narratives and images, full of the *joie de vivre* of voyageurs and hunters singing and fiddling as they paddled over dangerous rivers or roamed the open plains in search of buffalo herds. These masculine representations of Métis life showed a society perpetually in motion – hunting furs, transporting goods, chasing buffalo – and originated largely from the accounts of 19th century writers and artists who spent time travelling in the *pays d'en haut*. (Macdougall 2010, 93)

Dem stellt Macdougall ganz andere Muster der räumlichen Mobilität gegenüber:

> Residency and employment in the trade were both significant framers of Métis-identity in the 19th century. These were not a people in perpetual motion – they lived and worked in the northwest or English River District, and their movements, as associated with their employment, were very much tied to a well-defined and regionally bound geography. (Macdougall 2010, 126)

Zugleich betont die Autorin die Bedeutung europäischer Einrichtungen für die Entwicklungsgeschichte der Métis. Sie spricht speziell die besondere Rolle der Kirche im Akkulturationsprozess an und stellt die Anziehungskraft des Katholizismus in einen direkten Zusammenhang mit den im *wahkootowin* verankerten Wertvorstellungen, um bestimmte Kontinuitätsmuster herausarbeiten zu können. Die Teilnahme an kirchlichen Ritualen und Festlichkeiten gerät so zum Indikator für Inklusions- oder Exklusionsmechanismen in der Métis-Gemeinschaft. Wie schon ansatzweise bei Payment steht diese positive Sicht auf den Klerus im Widerspruch zur radikalen

Kirchenkritik, die sich in Maria Campbells *Halfbreed* findet oder die der Historiker und Métis-Aktivist Howard Adams in seinem Bestseller *Prison of Grass* (1975) vornimmt, wo er u.a. rückblickend feststellt:

> We accepted the belief that we were incapable of administering our community and this religious domination controlled our daily lives, suffocating our social development. Throughout my childhood, I was conditioned to relate to these religious authorities according to the principles of colonialism and white supremacy. [16] (Adams 1975, 30)

Die deutlich voneinander abweichenden Beurteilungen der Kirche spiegeln wohl auch die innerhalb der jeweiligen Gemeinden sehr unterschiedlichen Erfahrungen mit dem katholischen Klerus wider, so dass von einer generalisierenden Wertung des Verhältnisses zwischen Métis und lokaler Seelsorge Abstand zu nehmen ist. Dies gilt umso mehr, als die Erfahrungen der protestantischen *Halfbreeds* mit ihren Kirchenvertretern von den Betrachtungen ausgenommen bleiben.

Ein anderer Aspekt, den Macdougall in die Debatte einbringt, betrifft das Beschäftigungsverhältnis zwischen den Métis und der *Hudson's Bay Company* (HBC) als Arbeitgeber. Die Forscherin argumentiert, Tätigkeiten im Dienste der Handelsgesellschaft seien für die Formierung einer kulturellen Identität der Métis außerordentlich bedeutsam gewesen, da das Arbeiten im Kollektiv sowie eheliche Verbindungen zwischen Händlerfamilien zur Netzwerkbildung beigetragen und Familienbeziehungen gestärkt hätten. Im Übrigen hätten die Métis auch als Vermittler bei Konflikten zwischen Kirche und HBC gewirkt. Derartige Formen selbstbestimmten Handelns sowie die aktive Teilhabe an politischen Entscheidungen und der Gestaltung ökonomischer Beziehungen verwiesen auf die Stärke von *wahkootowin*.

Im Ergebnis liegt also eine gleichermaßen weitläufige wie ungemein facettenreiche und detaillierte Untersuchung vor, die unter Einbeziehung eines genderbezogenen Blickwinkels Ort, Raum, Familie, Genealogie und soziale Netzwerke zu Wissenschaftsparadigmen einer Studie erheben, die der distinktiven Identität einer Métis-Kommune nachgeht oder, wie die Autorin bereits eingangs ankündigt:

> [a] greater knowledge and understanding of an Aboriginal construction of family [does] not only give us greater insight into Aboriginal worldview and epistemology but […] also transform[s] our understanding of both fur trade and mission history. Such an approach situates Aboriginal history […] within a space where people developed institutions and responded to external forces in ways that affirmed their values and sense of distinctiveness. (Macdougall 2010, XI)

16 Howard Adams wuchs in einer anglikanischen Familie auf, besuchte aber eine von Nonnen geleitete High School in Batoche.

Im Gegensatz zu früheren Arbeiten stehen kaum noch politische, klassenspezifische oder völkergeschichtliche Aspekte, d.h. von europäischen und nordamerikanischen Forschungsparametern geprägte Fragestellungen, sondern vornehmlich die Rückkoppelung an komplexe indigene Normen im Vordergrund. Dabei wird auch deutlich, dass die Métis-Kultur von Sakitawak ursprünglich ihre Wurzeln stärker in eingeborenen Wertvorstellungen denn in externen Kräften wie dem Pelzhandel, der katholischen Kirche oder nationalistischen Bewegungen hatte, wiewohl diese im Laufe der weiteren Geschichte ebenfalls prägend wirkten. Bedeutsam ist auch, dass der Fokus in *One of the Family* von Red River, d.h. einem geographisch, zeitlich und kulturell im historischen Diskurs so überpräsenten Territorium, auf eine andere Region ausgeweitet wird. Zudem kommt der Untersuchung insofern Modellcharakter zu, als auf der Basis einer integrativen Betrachtung so unterschiedlicher Quellen wie Kirchenregistern, Briefen, mündlich fundiertem Datenmaterial, Aufzeichnungen der HBC etc. eine umfassende Genealogie des English River District über fünf Generationen hinweg entworfen wird. Im Ergebnis bedeutet dies: "At the intersection of these indigenous community values and institutional expectations in economic, political, or cultural spheres, the Métis expressed their self-determination and forged a society different from, but compatible with, that of their ancestors" (Macdougall 2010, 248).

Bemerkenswert an den beiden beispielhaft herausgestellten Werken aus der Métis-Historiographie ist die Abkehr von einer Makro- zu einer Mikrogeschichtsschreibung, in deren Mittelpunkt nicht mehr die großen politischen Ereignisse und Gestalten, die das Schicksal ganzer Völker lenken, sondern kleinere, überschaubare, kommunal-, familien- und clansgeschichtlich orientierte Forschungsgegenstände stehen. Dies weist eine unverkennbare Parallele zu den in Maria Campbells und Beatrice Culletons fiktionalen Arbeiten anzutreffenden biographischen Erzählungen auf. Zugleich resultiert die Abkehr von den großen Narrativen in einer Dezentralisierung und Demythisierung von Schlüsselfiguren wie Riel und Dumont, die zwar nach wie vor Gegenstand der Forschung sind, in der Vergangenheit aber so sehr im Mittelpunkt einschlägiger Studien standen, dass ihre Geschichte zu einer eigenen *master narrative* erwachsen konnte.

Allgemein auffällig ist auch, dass an die Stelle des 'dekorierten' Einzelforschers oftmals WissenschaftlerInnenkollektive treten, darunter viele mit ausschließlich weiblichen Akteuren. Schriftliche Quellen werden durch indigenes, mündlich tradiertes Material ergänzt, indigene Weltsichten wie *wahkootowin* werden konzeptionell im Sinne eines Forschungsparadigmas in struktureller und damit zeit- bzw. generationenübergreifender Art und Weise operationalisiert. Macdougall "borrows heavily from the techniques of the school of new social history" (McDougall 2010, 11), wie sie selbst in ihrer Einleitung konstatiert. Zugleich arbeitet die indigene Geschichtswissenschaft mit Modellen, die zwar in eigenen Vorstellungen und Philosophien ihre Wurzeln haben, sofern aber eine Übersetzung in nicht-indigene akademische Konzepte erfolgt, an das von der Annales-Schule um Fernand Braudel

entwickelte Konzept der *longue durée* erinnern. Sie favorisieren weniger *événement* oder *courte durée*, sondern ein Verständnis von Geschichte, das die langsame Entwicklung gesellschaftlicher, politischer und wirtschaftlicher Strukturen in den Vordergrund rückt – „ein Zusammenspiel, ein Gefüge, aber mehr noch eine Realität, die von der Zeit wenig abgenutzt und sehr lange fortbewegt wird" (Honegger 1977, 24). Zugleich ist eine Abkehr von einer strengen Fachbezogenheit zugunsten einer komplementären Interdisziplinarität zu konstatieren. Indigenes Wissen und akademische Forschung gehen eine vielversprechende Symbiose ein.

Forschung ist stets das Produkt ihrer Umstände, d.h. ihrer Protagonisten und zeitspezifischen Attitüden. Mithin stellt sie sich als ein offenes, in Bewegung befindliches System dar, das entsprechende Wandlungen und Veränderungen erfährt. Gleichwohl ist für den Bereich der *Native Studies* eine grundsätzliche Funktionszuweisung zu postulieren: *Native Studies* tragen nicht nur inhaltlich zum Transport indigener Sichtweisen, zur Überprüfung, gegebenenfalls auch Revision tradierter Erkenntnisse und zur Hinterfragung etablierter Wissenschaftsparadigmen bei, sie setzen vor allem auch das Bemühen um eine Dekolonisierung des eigenen Blicks voraus. Mithin ist dieser Beitrag auch ein Plädoyer für einen fachübergreifenden Dialog auf der Basis einer Integration vielfältiger Quellen historischer, aber auch literarischer Provenienz sowie indigener und nicht-indigener Ansätze, für eine – sofern dies der Gegenstandsbereich erlaubt – Métissage verschiedener Fachrichtungen und Epistemologien zugunsten einer synergetischen Erkenntnisausweitung.

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Jessica Janssen

L'autohistoire amérindienne: une méthode pour concilier les savoirs autochtones et le discours scientifique (de l'histoire) au Québec[1]

Abstract

Until the second half of the 20th century, the scientific discourse in Quebec was coined by a rather biased and distorted representation of the Indigenous population, and Quebec's ruling elite propagated this stereotyped image of the bloodthirsty and irreligious savage. The 1970s mark the beginning of an important reversal towards political and cultural action including the rewriting of Quebec's history from an Indigenous point of view and Indigenous self-representation. This article presents the characteristics of the Amerindian autohistory *and its* autohistorical method *as well as it provides a rationale for the necessity of rewriting Quebec's history from an Indigenous perspective. A further aim is to show that Indigenous autohistory is an adequate tool to integrate Indigenous knowledge into the academic discourse.*

Résumé

Jusqu'à la deuxième moitié du XXe siècle, le discours scientifique au Québec fut forgé par une représentation partiale et défigurée de la population autochtone. Cette image stéréotypée du sauvage sanguinaire et non croyant fut propagée par l'élite dominante au Québec. Les années 1970 marquent le début d'un revirement, incitant les nations autochtones à l'action politique et culturelle. La réécriture de l'histoire québécoise du point de vue amérindien et l'autoreprésentation autochtone représentent une telle action. Cet article présente les éléments caractéristiques de l'autohistoire amérindienne *et de la* méthode autohistorique*. En plus, il rend compte des raisons pourquoi une réécriture de l'histoire du Québec est nécessaire. Il s'avère également que l'autohistoire amérindienne est un moyen adéquat afin de concilier les savoirs autochtones et le discours scientifique.*

1 Cette contribution reprend en partie des thèmes développés dans Janssen 2013: 2-13, 48-49, 51, 53-54, 59, 80-81.

Introduction

Lorsqu'on étudie les représentations des Premières nations[2] dans l'historiographie du Québec, il est presque impossible de trouver autre chose que des images généralement stéréotypées: le bon et le mauvais Sauvage, le païen barbare, le guerrier sanguinaire, le cannibale, l'Indien ivre et paresseux, la princesse indienne, la squaw ou, tout simplement, les sauvages. Comme les nombreuses sources euro-canadiennes le montrent, ces 'pauvres créatures' furent, entre autres avec l'aide des missionnaires français, transformées en 'êtres civilisés et croyants'. Malgré leur rapprochement forcé au mode de vie occidental, réalisé par la sédentarisation, l'évangélisation et la scolarisation, les nations autochtones furent toujours représentées comme étant culturellement inférieures et donc vouées à disparaître, au moins sur les plans culturel et identitaire. Des images stéréotypées, exotisées, érotisées, déshumanisées, erronées et faussées de l'Autre autochtone furent alors créées et transmises majoritairement par des personnes allochtones qui les utilisèrent afin de défendre, de justifier et de légitimer les projets explorateurs, colonisateurs, civilisateurs et assimilateurs dans le 'Nouveau Monde.' Depuis la 'découverte' du territoire aujourd'hui nommé Québec au XVIe siècle jusqu'à la deuxième moitié du XXe siècle, ces représentations de l'Amérindien dans l'historiographie du Québec furent maintenues par les autorités anglophones et francophones. L'enseignement dans les écoles et les universités en particulier aida à largement transmettre ces représentations qui trouvaient leur justification dans les sciences forgées par les théories des races et de l'évolution (sociale).[3] Les perspectives amérindiennes sur des événements passés ainsi que la tradition orale furent constamment cataloguées comme étant fausses et mensongères ou bien ignorées et exclues du discours scientifique.

2 La désignation *Premières nations* fut créée pour remplacer le terme *Indiens* qui est considéré comme offensant. Dès les années 1970, cette expression est largement diffusée au Québec bien qu'il n'y ait pas de définition officielle sur le plan juridique. Compte tenu de la *Loi sur les Indiens* (1876), le terme *Premières nations* désigne les Indiens inscrits et non-inscrits. Les Indiens, Inuit et Métis forment les trois peuples autochtones qui sont officiellement reconnus au Canada. Le terme *Premières nations* n'est pas synonyme des expressions suivantes qui désignent tous les premiers habitants du Canada et leurs descendants incluant les Inuit et les Métis: *les peuples autochtones/ les Autochtones*, *la population autochtone*, *les nations autochtones* et *les premiers peuples*. Pour des renseignements supplémentaires, voir le guide *Terminologie autochtone*, rédigé par le ministère des Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada (maintenant: Affaires autochtones et Développement du Nord Canada). Veuillez noter que l'expression *les Amérindiens* est une notion très répandue au Québec pour désigner tous les peuples des Premières nations. Cette expression est aussi utilisée par les membres des Premières nations eux-mêmes. Pour des renseignements supplémentaires sur les nations autochtones au Québec, voir aussi le chapitre 7 dans Lepage 2009.

3 Surtout les manuels d'histoire maintinrent et firent circuler les représentations stéréotypées, erronées et imaginées des peuples autochtones, dont témoignent, entre autres, les deux premiers tomes de l'Histoire du Canada (1951), intitulés *Chez les Indiens, les missionnaires sont venus* et *Les Français s'établissent au pays des Indiens* (Montréal: v. Frères des écoles chrétiennes). Voir aussi Vincent/Arcand 1979.

Dans l'introduction de son étude intitulée *Pour une autohistoire amérindienne: essai sur les fondements d'une morale sociale* (1989)[4], l'historien wendat[5] Georges Sioui[6] décrit l'expérience et les conséquences de cette représentation partiale:

> Triste et confus, je repris le chemin de l'école à la maison, après avoir reçu ma première leçon d'histoire du Canada. […] 'Vos ancêtres, avait dit l'imposante mère supérieure chargée de la classe d'histoire, étaient des Sauvages qui n'avaient pas la connaissance de Dieu. Ils étaient ignorants et insouciants de leur salut.' Puis, avec une sincérité qui l'amenait par moments au bord des larmes: 'Le roi de France en eut pitié et leur envoya des missionnaires qui ont essayé de les convertir, mais vos ancêtres, les Sauvages, ont tué ces missionnaires qui sont devenus les saints martyrs canadiens. Grâce à Dieu et son Église, vous êtes aujourd'hui devenus des gens civilisés. Chaque jour, vous devez demander pardon à Dieu pour les péchés de vos ancêtres et Le remercier de vous avoir fait connaître la foi catholique, de vous avoir arrachés aux mains du diable qui maintenait vos aïeux dans une existence d'idolâtrie, de vol, de mensonge et de cannibalisme. (G. Sioui 1999, 1)

Les affirmations de la religieuse sont toutes contradictoires aux connaissances que les enfants amérindiens eurent de leur histoire et culture. Les répercussions nocives et l'effet traumatisant d'une telle transmission de contenus historiques et culturels sur l'identité des Premières nations étaient et sont toujours omniprésents. Cependant, dès le début des années 1970, cette expérience collective provoqua un changement de pensée et d'action chez une multitude de nations autochtones non seulement au Québec, mais partout dans le monde comme, par exemple, au Canada anglophone, aux États-Unis, en Nouvelle-Zélande et en Australie. Ce boulever-

4 Il s'agit du titre original du livre, publié en 1989. Les citations sont prises de la réédition de l'année 1999, intitulée *Pour une histoire amérindienne de l'Amérique*. Il y eut un changement de titre, mais le contenu des deux livres resta identique.

5 Selon les mots de l'anthropologue wendate Linda Sioui, « [l]es Français ont nommé ce peuple semi-sédentaire les 'Hurons', en référence à la façon dont les guerriers portaient leur chevelure en temps de guerre, qui leur rappelait la raie de poils sur la tête des sangliers, la 'hure' » (L. Sioui 2012, 29). La désignation utilisée par la nation elle-même est *Wendats*.

6 Georges Emery Sioui (né en 1948 à Wendake), historien, poète, essayiste et conférencier, est un des spécialistes autochtones les plus reconnus au sujet de l'histoire et de la culture des Amérindiens au Québec et de la nation wendate en particulier. Sioui travailla pour le ministère des Affaires indiennes (1977-1980) et fut délégué au Groupe de travail sur les droits des peuples autochtones aux Nations Unies à Genève (1993). Dans son anthologie de la *Littérature amérindienne du Québec*, Maurizio Gatti écrit que G. Sioui « a contribué de façon remarquable à la revitalisation sociale et culturelle de sa nation et à sa connaissance dans le monde entier » (Gatti 2004, 234). Ses deux essais historiques *Pour une autohistoire amérindienne* (1989) et *Les Wendats: une civilisation méconnue* (1994) contribuent largement à faire connaître les peuples autochtones du Québec.

sement sera important pour leur survivance[7], leurs droits, leurs privilèges et leur reconnaissance politique, historique et culturelle.[8] Cette étape dans l'histoire des Premières nations est non seulement marquée par le réveil amérindien après une période de léthargie (« *idleness* »), mais aussi par la (ré-)action amérindienne. Des grands chefs des communautés et des nations, des auteurs et des érudits amérindiens prennent la parole et mettent par écrit l'histoire du point de vue autochtone: c'est le début de l'autoreprésentation amérindienne dans la science de l'histoire du Québec. Contrairement aux historiens non autochtones, les auteurs amérindiens accordent la plus grande attention à l'histoire des Premières nations en général ou à leur nation en particulier.[9] Plus précisément, l'historiographie amérindienne est caractérisée par la focalisation sur la « préhistoire », c'est-à-dire les événements s'étant déroulés avant l'arrivée de Jacques Cartier en 1534, et sur la version amérindienne du déroulement historique. En revanche, les événements commençant par la 'découverte' de 'l'Île de la Tortue' et leurs protagonistes européens, canadiens et québécois ne sont plus exclusivement au centre de l'historiographie du Québec**.** Comme les historiens occidentaux, les auteurs amérindiens utilisent l'écriture comme moyen de diffusion pour transmettre largement leur idée du déroulement

7 Bien que l'auteur anishinaabé Gerald Vizenor explique que les théories de la survivance soient floues par définition, il la décrit de la manière suivante dans *Survivance: Narratives of Native Presence* (2008): « The character of survivance creates a sense of native presence over absence, nihility, and victimry. Native survivance is an active sense of presence over absence, deracination, and oblivion; survivance is the continuance of stories, not a mere reaction, however pertinent. […] Survivance stories are renunciations of dominance, detractions, obtrusions, the unbearable sentiments of tragedy, and the legacy of victimry (1). » En disant qu'il s'agit d'une pratique, et non d'un simple concept théorisé, Vizenor souligne l'action et la prise de parole autochtones. La survivance « va au-delà de la simple survie, car elle est résistance en même temps » (Henzi 2010, 91, note de bas en page 5).

8 La longue expérience collective de cet enseignement – truffé de racisme, de préjugés, de mythes et de stéréotypes – n'est qu'un facteur de la mobilisation, de la résistance et de l'action de la population autochtone. Aussi la situation difficile de la reconnaissance juridique, la question des revendications territoriales, les lois imposées par les gouvernements fédéral et provinciaux et les rapports tendues entre les nations autochtones et allochtones (« *settler-Indigenous relations* ») qui en découlent et, finalement, la diversité des difficultés et problèmes sociaux dans les réserves (par exemple le chômage, la pauvreté, l'alcoolisme, la consommation abusive de drogues, la violence dans les familles et les suicides) conduisent-ils à la résistance aux conditions générales en ce temps-là. La crise d'Oka, un événement politique durant l'été 1990, est un exemple répandu de cette résistance, mais il faut souligner que la (ré-)action des nations autochtones est non-violente dans l'ensemble. Le mouvement « *Idle no more* » (« Fini l'inertie/ la passivité ») peut également être cité en exemple. Dans ce cas, la résistance se manifeste par des manifestations organisées et une grève de faim.

9 En effet, Bernard Assiniwi est, selon mes recherches, le seul auteur qui étudia l'ensemble des peuples autochtones de l'est du Canada. Les autres *autohistoriens amérindiens* traitent uniquement de la nation à laquelle ils appartiennent: Albert Connolly, An Antane Kapesh, Daniel Vachon et Pierre Gill parlent des Innus (auparavant appelés les *Montagnais*), Marguerite Vincent Téhariolina ainsi que Georges Sioui écrivent sur les Wendats et Yvon H. Couture examine l'histoire des Algonquins.

historique au Québec. C'est une mesure considérable parce qu'il s'agit du même moyen qui fut utilisé par les colonisateurs pour propager leur vérité historique et pour opprimer les peuples autochtones. Tout de même, les écrits des Amérindiens se démarquent des documents écrits par les Européens, et plus tard par les Canadiens-français, en prenant en compte les témoignages transmis oralement à l'intérieur des nations autochtones. Par conséquent, les auteurs amérindiens utilisent le même moyen de transmission que leurs oppresseurs, mais en même temps ils le modifient en leur faveur. Les auteurs amérindiens d'œuvres *autohistoriques* étudient et réinterprètent à la fois les sources historiques écrites du point de vue euro-canadien, les récits transmis par la tradition orale et les preuves archéologiques. Puis, ils réécrivent leurs versions du déroulement historique au Québec. Ainsi, ils tentent de démontrer une historiographie qui serait plus équilibrée par sa variété de sources, plus réaliste et à la fin plus proche des expériences vécues par les Autochtones au Québec.

Cet article présente les éléments caractéristiques de l'autohistoire amérindienne. De plus, il veut démontrer pourquoi cette méthode est apte à intégrer les savoirs autochtones dans le discours scientifique.

Définition de l'autohistoire amérindienne

C'est Georges Sioui qui, dans son étude *Pour une autohistoire amérindienne*, publiée en 1989, forgea la notion *autohistoire amérindienne* et élabora le squelette théorique de ce genre ainsi que de la méthode *autohistorique*. Le terme en lui-même nous dit qu'il s'agit d'un récit qui porte sur l'histoire et la culture des Autochtones de l'Amérique du Nord et qui est raconté, que ce soit sous forme orale, écrite, symbolique ou visuelle, par un auteur de souche amérindienne. En conséquence, nous pouvons faire observer avec Basma El Omari que les autohistoriens amérindiens s'intéressent à « la représentation des Autochtones par eux-mêmes, au désir de l'Autochtone d'être non pas un objet d'étude mais un sujet qui exprime son identité ou même la perte de son identité » (El Omari 2003, 134). Dans cette tentative d'expliquer l'autohistoire, El Omari met l'accent sur l'autoreprésentation autochtone, une des caractéristiques les plus importantes du concept autohistorique.

Dans sa préface au livre de G. Sioui, Bruce G. Trigger formule une brève définition de l'autohistoire pour initier le lecteur au sujet: « Qu'est-ce que l'autohistoire? C'est l'histoire autochtone écrite en conformité avec les valeurs amérindiennes, ce qui veut dire surtout par des autochtones […] » (Trigger ds. Sioui 1999, xi). Trigger y souligne les aspects de l'autoreprésentation et de la perspective amérindiennes comme condition essentielle du respect des valeurs autochtones. Donc, l'autohistoire décrit non seulement le déroulement historique en Amérique du Nord comme les Amérindiens l'ont connu, mais elle présente aussi la culture autochtone avec toutes ses facettes. Éléonore Sioui souligne la nécessité des peuples autochtones de se représenter eux-mêmes en disant que ce sont seulement les Amérin-

diens qui peuvent exprimer et décrire leur culture et leur identité d'une manière adéquate et correcte:

> Pour ce qui est de l'histoire du peuple amérindien, elle n'a jamais été écrite. Si parfois on a écrit des faits la concernant, ce ne fut relaté qu'à travers l'optique du 'Blanc', lequel ne pouvait la concevoir selon le point de vue de l'Indien: chose impossible, parce que ce sont deux mentalités différentes qui ne perçoivent pas les valeurs avec les mêmes concepts, qui ne croient pas aux mêmes valeurs fondamentales, qui appartiennent à deux modes différents. (É. Sioui 1972, 40)

Selon la philosophe wendate, les non-Autochtones ne seraient pas capables de produire une image authentique de l'Amérindien parce qu'ils appartiennent à un autre monde et croient en d'autres valeurs essentielles. Cette vision est très restrictive et représente une source potentielle pour susciter des conflits entre Amérindiens et Allochtones. Effectivement, É. Sioui exclut les non-Autochtones de l'écriture de l'histoire amérindienne, mais elle n'est pas la seule représentante de cette opinion radicale: à titre d'exemple, Albert Connolly[10], auteur de l'autohistoire *Les Indiens Montagnais* (1972), partage le même avis (v. Connolly 1972, 8) ainsi que Bernard Assiniwi[11] qui dit qu' « *il fallait, je crois, être INDIEN de sang et de cœur* » (Assiniwi 1973, t. 1, 12) pour être capable de comprendre vraiment les peuples autochtones et leur culture.

En revanche, Trigger, un anthropologue canadien, ne veut pas s'engager à propos de cette question à savoir si l'histoire autochtone ne peut être écrite que par les Amérindiens eux-mêmes. Il met plutôt l'accent sur les valeurs fondamentales et l'optique amérindienne que les historiens non autochtones peuvent aussi respecter. En effet, en publiant son étude ethno-historique *The Children of Aataentsic: A History*

10 Albert Connolly, né en 1926, fut grand chef de la réserve de Pointe-Bleue (qui porte le nom *Mashteuiatsh* depuis 1985). Dans la préface à son autohistoire, l'auteur est décrit comme « un Indien Montagnais authentique, demeurant à Pointe-Bleue […]. Il est le Chef de sa Tribu à laquelle il se consacre entièrement. » (Louis-N. Hudon ds. Connolly 1972, 3) Malheureusement, il était impossible de trouver d'autres informations biographiques sur Albert Connolly.

11 Bernard Assiniwi (1935-2000) « est un des rares auteurs amérindiens dont on peut dire qu'il a eu une carrière littéraire » (Gatti 2004, 208). Il fut le fils d'une mère canadienne-française d'origine algonquine et d'un père algonquin et cri. Sa filière fut vaste: étudiant de génétique animale, chercheur en histoire autochtone, animateur de radio, professeur, journaliste, conférencier et écrivain. En outre, il travailla pour le gouvernement fédéral où il exerça la fonction du « directeur fondateur de la section culturelle du ministère des Affaires indiennes et du Nord canadien à Ottawa » (Gatti 2004, 206) dans la deuxième moitié des années 1960. Avec ses innombrables publications, Assiniwi contribua grandement à faire connaître et à revaloriser les peuples autochtones, leur histoire et leur culture. Son œuvre *Anish-nah-be: Contes adultes du pays algonkin* (1971), publié aux Éditions Leméac où Assiniwi fut directeur de la collection « Ni-t'chawama, mon ami mon frère », fut le premier livre en français d'un auteur amérindien distribué largement au Québec.

of the Huron People to 1660, Trigger met son avis en pratique. Cette œuvre, publiée en 1976, fut révolutionnaire au Québec: c'est un des premiers livres historiques sur les Amérindiens d'un auteur non autochtone écrit en faveur de la population autochtone. Un autre ouvrage valorisant la culture amérindienne est *Le pays renversé: Amérindiens et Européens en Amérique du Nord-Est, 1600-1664* (1985), écrit par l'historien québécois Denys Delâge.

Mais comment un auteur amérindien peut-il écrire une histoire qui serait en accord avec les valeurs de son peuple? G. Sioui définit sa méthode autohistorique d'une manière très pertinente avec les mots suivants:

> […] il s'agit d'une technique qui vise à établir, grâce à un ensemble varié de sources et de catégories d'informateurs, les traits culturels constants d'un ou de plusieurs peuples culturellement apparentés. Une telle méthode devrait servir de base à l'établissement d'une nouvelle histoire conforme à l'image d'eux-mêmes que les hommes ont ou devraient toujours avoir eue. (G. Sioui 1999, 51-52)

Un nombre important de sources et d'informateurs est considéré par la méthode autohistorique. Celle-ci comprend aussi bien la réinterprétation de sources historiques (en général les témoignages écrits par des explorateurs, des commerçants impliqués dans la traite des fourrures, des colonisateurs et des missionnaires européens) que la prise en considération de récits oraux. La nouvelle approche de la méthode autohistorique prend conscience du rôle important de l'oralité et crée pour la tradition orale une place exceptionnelle dans l'historiographie amérindienne. Pour les partisans de la théorie autohistorique, l'oralité est non seulement la source la plus valorisée, mais encore la source la plus digne de confiance parce qu'elle est le moyen traditionnel et le plus répandu pour transmettre les savoirs autochtones. En incluant les témoignages oraux comme source d'information dans leurs récits historiques, G. Sioui et les autres autohistoriens amérindiens révolutionnèrent le domaine de l'historiographie du Québec. En outre, d'autres sciences comme l'archéologie, l'anthropologie, l'ethnologie et la sociologie sont prises en compte. En recommandant de considérer aussi ces domaines, qui pourraient poser un regard nouveau sur l'histoire et la culture de la population amérindienne du Québec, G. Sioui poursuit clairement une approche interdisciplinaire. Il pense surtout à l'archéologie parce qu'elle est la discipline toute désignée pour reconstruire le passé des peuples autochtones et pour retracer leur histoire et leur culture.[12] Par le truchement de l'autoreprésentation, les Amérindiens obtiennent la possibilité d'effacer et de modifier les représentations stéréotypées du bon et du mauvais

12 À l'heure actuelle, des archéologues étudient les pétroglyphes au Canada et trouvent également des représentations symboliques des Premières nations. Ces témoignages sont révélateurs du passé des Autochtones, leur culture et leur vision du monde. Malheureusement, beaucoup de ces images furent détruites lors de la colonisation du pays.

Sauvage et de créer une nouvelle image de l'Autochtone qui est conforme à sa propre perception identitaire. Cela permet aux membres des Premières nations d'insister sur leur identité collective exceptionnelle en marge de la société dominante québécoise. En bref, ils peuvent résister à l'assimilation, un but auquel les autorités non autochtones ont toujours aspiré.

Les savoirs autochtones et l'académie

Comme nous l'avons vu plus haut, l'an 1989 est une date-clé dans la science de l'histoire québécoise parce que, avec la publication de son étude *Pour une autohistoire amérindienne*, G. Sioui aspire à rénover le discours scientifique. En remettant en question la manière d'agir que les chercheurs et universitaires occidentaux poursuivirent jusque-là, il plaide pour l'autoreprésentation amérindienne et la reconnaissance scientifique des savoirs autochtones. L'Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture définit les savoirs autochtones comme suit:

> Les savoirs locaux et autochtones comprennent les connaissances, savoir-faire et philosophies développés par des sociétés ayant une longue histoire d'interaction avec leur environnement naturel. Pour les peuples ruraux et autochtones, le savoir traditionnel est à la base des décisions prises sur des aspects fondamentaux de leur vie quotidienne.
> Ce savoir est une partie intégrante d'un système culturel qui prend appui sur la langue, les systèmes de classification, les pratiques d'utilisation des ressources, les interactions sociales, les rituels et la spiritualité. (ONU 2015, sans indication de page)

De cette façon, les connaissances et témoignages des Premières nations concernant leur histoire et leur culture, traditionnellement transmis oralement, sont classés parmi les savoirs autochtones. Par conséquent, l'autohistoire amérindienne, traitant des savoirs autochtones, représente une nouvelle forme de savoir autochtone et doit passer dans le discours scientifique. Angela Cavender Wilson explique que l'emploi des savoirs autochtones et leur intégration dans le discours scientifique sont étroitement liés à un processus de décolonisation de l'académie:

> The recovery of Indigenous knowledge is deeply intertwined with the process of decolonization because for many of us it is only through a consciously critical assessment of how the historical process of colonization has systematically devalued our Indigenous ways that we can begin to reverse the damage wrought from those assaults. (Wilson 2004, 72)

Daniel Coleman, aussi, souligne le rapport entre la décolonisation et l'intégration des savoirs autochtones dans le discours scientifique en disant que la décolonisa-

tion intellectuelle (« *intellectual decolonization* ») implique la reconnaissance d'une variété de systèmes de savoirs (v. Coleman 2013, 143). Il précise:

> Interest in and respect for different knowings means consciously turning to different knowers as authorities and sources of knowledge. It means a conscious politics of citation, which refuses to recite the same authorities endlessly while maintaining motivated ignorance and silence around alternative authorities. (Coleman 2013, 143)

Coleman exige ainsi que l'académie prenne en considération la diversité des systèmes de savoir et, en plus, il manifeste le même intérêt et le respect pour les savoirs alternatifs. Dans l'autohistoire amérindienne, le traitement du matériel est caractérisé par une analyse comparative de divers systèmes de savoir pour avoir la possibilité de réinterpréter les sources. Néanmoins, les approches personnelles avec lesquelles les auteurs autochtones évaluent leurs sources pour démontrer leur vision de l'histoire et la persistance des valeurs essentielles amérindiennes peuvent varier selon chaque auteur. Je voudrais brièvement illustrer cette observation à l'aide de deux exemples. Dans son analyse des sources, G. Sioui est en quête des points communs entre les documents écrits de la perspective euro-américaine et la tradition orale des peuples autochtones. Ainsi, en disant que l'autohistoire amérindienne est l'« étude de la correspondance des sources amérindiennes et non amérindiennes » (G. Sioui 1999, 5), G. Sioui comprend cette approche comme étant un élément caractéristique de sa méthode. Dans un autre ordre d'idées, l'écrivain algonquin-cri Assiniwi montre dans son *Histoire des Indiens du Haut et du Bas Canada* qu'il est possible de poursuivre une autre approche pour atteindre les mêmes objectifs. Assiniwi explique qu'il fait objet de son écriture tous les faits historiques et culturels qui furent soit oubliés soit négligés par les auteurs occidentaux, tout en ayant été transmis oralement par les peuples autochtones et, de ce fait, restant vivants dans leur mémoire collective. Ainsi, l'auteur compare les documents écrits aux récits oraux pour démontrer les divergences et les omissions: « Et c'est avec un manque total et volontaire d'objectivité que j'ai pris la décision d'écrire ce que les historiens ont oublié ou omis volontairement de dire » (Assiniwi 1973, t. 1, 11). L'approche d'Assiniwi rappelle le concept de la *déconstruction*[13] introduit par Jacques Derrida dans son œuvre *De la grammatologie* (1967) en le définissant comme étant une pratique d'analyse textuelle révélant des oppositions conceptuelles et idéologiques (v. Derrida 1967). La déconstruction est également une partie intégrale des études postcoloniales comme méthode pour mettre en question et

13 Assiniwi n'est pas le seul autohistorien amérindien qui utilise la méthode de la déconstruction et du renversement du discours colonial; voir aussi *La nation huronne* de Marguerite Vincent Téhariolina, *Eukuan nin matshimanitu innu-iskueu/ Je suis une maudite Sauvagesse* de An Antane Kapesh et *Les Algonquins* de Yvon H. Couture.

critiquer les systèmes et idéologies coloniaux.[14] Souvent utilisée par les peuples colonisés, elle permet de bouleverser les hiérarchies établies par les colonisateurs, de revaloriser les peuples dits 'inférieurs' et de stimuler la réflexion. Les analyses inspirés par la méthode déconstructiviste démontrent non seulement ce qui est privilégié, mais cherchent aussi ce qui est négligé, délaissé ou opprimé. En suggérant que la critique est une complice du système dominant et hégémonique, la théorie de la déconstruction se penche sur le rôle de l'académie et souligne la nécessité de décoloniser l'académie.

Dans les études autochtones, les pratiques de la déconstruction et du renversement du discours colonial sont étroitement liées aux efforts de décoloniser l'académie et d' « *amérindianiser* » (G. Sioui 1999, 141) l'académie. « *Indigenizing the academy* » (Abbott Mihesuah/Wilson 2004, 5) est le leitmotiv d'une génération ambitieuse de critiques autochtones qui lutte pour la reconnaissance et l'égalité et contre toute forme de racisme et d'oppression. Pour Wilson, amérindianiser l'académie signifie la remise en question des institutions coloniales dominantes qui ignorèrent les savoirs et modes de vie alternatifs, continuent à les marginaliser et les considèrent comme insignifiants pour le monde moderne (v. Wilson 2004, 359). Elle voit la revalorisation des savoirs autochtones comme une stratégie importante de la décolonisation et souligne la capacité de penser et d'agir (« *agency* ») du colonisé (362). Isobel M. Findlay souligne l'importance de critiquer les exclusions et de déconstruire les systèmes de pouvoir, mais elle insiste également sur la célébration de la culture autochtone (I. Findlay ds. Coleman 2013, 146). Selon Linda Tuhiwai Smith, l'*amérindianisation*[15] comprend les mesures suivantes: d'abord, il faut réétudier (« *researching back* », Smith 1999, 7) les sources et les écrits sur les Autochtones; puis, il faut démystifier (« *demystification* », 16) les cultures autochtones en recentrant (« *recentering* », 10), réécrivant et rectifiant (« *rewriting and rerighting* », 149) l'histoire des peuples autochtones, pour, finalement, faire avancer les processus de décolonisation, de guérison, de transformation et de mobilisation (« *decolonization, healing, transformation, and mobilization* », 116).

Néanmoins, l'idée d'amérindianiser l'académie n'est pas complètement nouvelle. En effet, l'autohistoire amérindienne peut clairement être identifiée comme étant le résultat d'une philosophie aspirant à amérindianiser l'académie, ou même le monde. Dans son autohistoire *La Nation huronne: son histoire, sa culture, son esprit*, publiée premièrement en 1984, Marguerite Vincent Téhariolina[16] compare le pro-

14 Pour une introduction aux études postcoloniales, voir Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths et Helen Tiffin. *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*. New York: Routledge, 2000.

15 Ce terme est un néologisme du verbe *amérindianiser*.

16 Marguerite Vincent Téhariolina (1909-1994) fut très intéressée à sa propre histoire et culture. Sa création de la troupe de danse amérindienne *Cabir-Coubat*, qui a fait plusieurs prestations artistiques au Québec et à l'extérieur, ainsi que son engagement à la revitalisation de la langue wendate témoignent de cet intérêt. Sa passion de préserver la mémoire des siens l'amène à rédiger un livre sur la nation wendate, paru la première fois en 1984; *La nation huronne* fut le seul

cessus de l'amérindianisation à celui d'« humaniser le Blanc » (1995, 22). G. Sioui, pour sa part, comprend par l'« américisation[17] du monde » (1999, 5) « un processus d'unification idéologique […] par lequel l'essence de la pensée américaine originale [amérindienne] se communique aux autres continents. Nous serions donc face à un phénomène d'assimilation en sens inverse […] » (5). Vincent et G. Sioui soutiennent donc cette philosophie dans un sens plus large et plus radical. Or, G. Sioui exprime ouvertement son désir d'amérindianiser l'académie en intégrant les savoirs autochtones dans le discours scientifique à l'aide de son approche alternative:

> Par le mot 'autohistoire', j'ai voulu exprimer l'idée qu'il n'a pas encore existé d'histoire véritable des Amérindiens, puisque l'histoire conventionnelle n'a pas encore inventé de méthode qui permette d'intégrer la vision amérindienne à son discours. Cette incapacité est bien naturelle, puisqu'il incombe en réalité aux Amérindiens de s'expliquer eux-mêmes. (G. Sioui ds. Ricard 1991, 77)

Il faut se rappeler que les Amérindiens au Québec, leurs savoirs, leur vision du monde et leur version de l'histoire furent largement marginalisés voire tout simplement ignorés par les historiens occidentaux, comme le constate Denis Vollant: « Dans l'histoire du Canada et du Québec, les Premières nations ont eu, jusqu'à maintenant, très peu de visibilité et seule une vision folklorique a subsisté » (Vollant ds. Lepage 2009, iii). Jusqu'aux années 1970, il n'y eut aucune historiographie parlant des Amérindiens qui fut reconnue par les peuples autochtones. Les livres d'histoire – y compris ceux portant sur l'histoire des nations autochtones – furent uniquement le fruit de la plume des colonisateurs du continent nord-américain, décrivant les événements historiques et les traditions culturelles selon la perspective 'supérieure' des Européens.[18] Cela implique que le discours scientifique au Québec fut forgé et fortement influencé par sa partialité et l'absence de la perspective amérindienne. En même temps, les nations autochtones furent privées de leur droit à l'autoreprésentation. La réécriture de l'histoire de l'optique des Premières nations est donc un tournant dans la science de l'histoire. Je voudrais illustrer cette observation importante en comparant deux versions différentes de la découverte du minerai dans le nord du Québec, soit les récits occidental et autochtone. Le récit officiel attribue la découverte du minerai de fer au Père Louis Babel (1826-1912), un mis-

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livre qu'elle publia. (Communication par courriel avec Teharihulen Michel Savard, conservateur au Musée huron-wendat, le 10 juin 2013.)

17 La notion *américisation* comprend l'acculturation, ou même l'assimilation des non-Autochtones, mais, à mon sens, l'essence de cette idée est la sensibilisation des non-Autochtones à la philosophie amérindienne. Le terme est synonyme de celui de l'*amérindianisation*.

18 J'aimerais rappeler ici l'idée de Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) que l'histoire est écrite par les vainqueurs et que l'optique des vaincus n'est pas communiquée. Pour des renseignements supplémentaires, voir Benjamin 2010.

sionnaire d'origine suisse chargé d'évangéliser les peuples amérindiens au Québec. Dans leur chapitre intitulé « Explorations géographiques: Représentations cartographiques et frontières du Nord québécois, » Benoît Robitaille et Nick Bernard écrivent qu' « il semble démontré et reconnu que le père Babel ait été le premier à mentionner ces gisements » (Robitaille/Bernard 2001, 117). Les auteurs se réfèrent à des documents écrits pour légitimer le statut de découvreur du Père Babel:

> C'est cependant sur la carte dressée par le Département des terres de la Couronne en 1873, faite à partir de 84 relevés qu'avait fait Babel lors de ses voyages, qu'on trouve les indications les plus précises concernant la présence de fer. […] À la hauteur du lac Knob, au sud de ce qui deviendra Schefferville, il inscrit « abondat [sic] en fer. » (117)

Dans *Eukuan nin matshimanitu innu-iskueu/ Je suis une maudite Sauvagesse* (1975), An Antane Kapesh[19] confirme la prédominance du récit occidental tout en remettant en question cette version officielle:

> En 1970, on a célébré un centenaire ici à Schefferville. C'est lors de cette célébration que nous avons entendu raconter pour la première fois que c'était le Père Babel qui a découvert le minerai de fer ici. Je n'ai jamais entendu raconter cette histoire par mon père, ni par d'autres Innu, ni par d'autres Vieux. […]
> La fête du minerai de fer de Schefferville s'est prolongée durant environ trois jours. Le premier jour, [Pierre Elliott] Trudeau est venu voir la fête car c'est à ce moment-là qu'allait sortir cette histoire inédite qui veut que le découvreur du minerai de fer, ici dans le Nord, soit le Père Babel. L'après-midi, avant que les gens rentrent chez eux, nous avons entendu quelqu'un parler au micro, en français et en innu : « On célèbre aujourd'hui le centenaire de la découverte du minerai de fer dans le Nord par le Père Babel », a-t-on dit.
> Après avoir entendu cela, j'étais perplexe : jamais je n'avais entendu mon père, ni les autres Innu ni les Vieux raconter cette histoire. Mon père est très âgé, il a quatre-vingt-onze ans. J'écoutais souvent mon père nous raconter tout ce qu'il a vu et les histoires qu'il a entendues concernant les générations passées. […] Il n'y a pas que mon père qui a conservé ces

19 An Antane Kapesh (1926-2004), vécut le mode de vie traditionnel des Innu jusqu'à la création de la réserve de Maliotenam (aujourd'hui appelée Mani-utenam) en 1953. De 1965 à 1967, elle fut chef de la communauté de Schefferville. En ayant été la première femme autochtone au Québec qui publia un livre en français, Kapesh fut une pionnière en littérature amérindienne. Ses mémoires bilingues (innu-français) *Eukuan nin matshimanitu innu-iskueu/ Je suis une maudite Sauvagesse* parurent en 1975 en France et un an plus tard au Québec. Son deuxième livre, un essai intitulé *Tanite nana etutamin nitassi?/ Qu'as-tu fait de mon pays?*, fut publié en 1979.

> histoires, il y a aussi son père, son grand-père et son arrière-grand-père. C'est comme cela qu'ils transmettaient des histoires pour raconter comment les choses se passaient dans le Nord avant qu'un seul étranger n'y vienne. (Kapesh 2015, 100-101)

Kapesh ne se contente pas de déconstruire l'historiographie officielle en dévoilant son caractère construit par le système colonial, mais elle présente une version alternative de la découverte du minerai qui s'appuie sur la tradition orale:

> Ceci est l'histoire de Tshishenish Pien et des Pères Babel et Arnaud. Vous ne trouverez cette histoire nulle part dans un livre car avant que l'étranger nous enseigne sa culture, nous les Innu, n'avions jamais vécu de telle manière que nous écrivions pour raconter les choses du passé. (99)

En citant son père, Kapesh précise que « *Et même s'il était vrai que le Père Babel ait découvert du minerai ici, je pense, moi, que ce n'est pas son nom à lui mais celui qui l'a amené dans le Nord qui devrait être associé au minerai qu'on a découvert.[…] L'homme s'appelle Atshapi Antane* » (101). Elle explique que « l'Innu Atshapi Antane est celui qui a conduit le Père Babel à l'intérieur des terres et l'Innu Tshishenish Pien est le premier à avoir trouvé du minerai ici dans le Nord » (102). Il importe de souligner le fait que Kapesh nomme les protagonistes autochtones impliqués essentiellement dans le processus de découverte ce qui leur donne de valeur et d'agentivité (« *agency* ») au lieu d'un rôle méconnu et secondaire de guide sans nom, voire d'une ignorance volontaire. Sa version constitue donc un contre-récit qui s'approprie un espace d'effacement et de représentation partiale des peuples autochtones et qui rectifie le discours colonial centré sur des héros blancs. En remettant en question la crédibilité de la version du colonisateur et en proposant une version alternative, l'autohistoire amérindienne peut être qualifiée de contre-récit au discours dominant au Québec:

> […] indigenous humanities are aligned with resistance and the development of counternarratives: narratives that counter forms of condescension and dismissal in the humanities traditionally conceived at the heart of the Eurocentric and Eurocolonial project. (Len Findlay ds. Coleman 2013, 158)

En outre, l'opinion de G. et É. Sioui, que l'histoire amérindienne ne fut jamais écrite, laisse supposer que les Premières nations au Québec seraient en quelque sorte un peuple anhistorique, sans histoire. Cependant, si nous prenons en compte la tradition orale, les peuples amérindiens au Québec ne sont anhistoriques en aucune manière. Kapesh explique:

> Le Blanc dit vrai quand il dit: 'L'Innu n'a pas de livre.' C'est vrai, l'Innu n'a pas de livre mais voici ce que je pense: chaque Innu possède des histoires dans sa tête, chaque Innu pourrait raconter la vie que nous vivions dans le passé et la vie des Blancs que nous vivons à présent […]. (Kapesh 2015, 99)

L'oralité fut le moyen préféré dans les communautés autochtones pour transmettre de génération en génération leurs témoignages des événements historiques autant que tous leurs savoirs. Ainsi, la tradition orale représente l'espace de leur mémoire collective. Dans les sociétés occidentales, le livre d'histoire occupe cet espace de la préservation de savoirs. Avec ces connaissances, nous comprenons mieux le sens du proverbe de l'écrivain mexicain Carlos Fuentes: « Tuer un Indien c'est comme incendier une bibliothèque » (Boudreau 1991, 58). Je suis convaincue que les peuples autochtones furent et sont encore très conscients de leur historicité, du rôle et de la valeur de leur tradition orale. Ce furent, et on peut bien argumenter que cette pratique d'ignorance ou de marginalisation continue jusqu'à ce jour, les universitaires occidentaux qui refusèrent d'accepter un autre modèle, une autre preuve que les mots écrits dans l'histori*ographie*.[20] L'élaboration d'une nouvelle technique écrite qui prend en considération la tradition orale fut donc nécessaire pour que l'histoire amérindienne soit reconnue par les historiens non autochtones et pour que la perspective et les savoirs autochtones soient intégrés dans le discours scientifique.

D'ailleurs, l'écriture amérindienne est fortement influencée par l'oralité et reflète les caractéristiques de la tradition orale. Je voudrais illustrer cette observation en me référant à l'autohistoire écrite par Assiniwi. Un élément important de l'oralité est la communication implicite de l'auteur avec son lecteur, effectuée par des appels: « *Si tu appartiens à la descendance de cet homme qui m'a oublié volontairement dans cet immense pays,* […] *écoute bien ce que j'ai envie de te dire depuis si longtemps.* » (Assiniwi 1973, t.1, 12) et par des questions rhétoriques: « *Pourquoi devrais-je, moi, un INDIEN, être objectif, alors que les historiens appartenant aux autres groupes ethniques ne l'ont jamais été?* » (11). Puis, le moyen stylistique de l'ironie est une composante intégrale des écrits amérindiens. Assiniwi l'utilise afin de stimuler la réflexion du lecteur. L'écriture provocante et ironique de l'auteur est clairement visible dans l'expression « *le 'SAUVAGE' que je suis* » (12) car il fait ressortir le mot sauvage en le mettant en capitales et entre guillemets. L'auteur s'y désigne lui-même comme sauvage; un statut qui est souvent mis en rapport avec les concepts du primitivisme

20 Ici, le mot *historiographie* signifie le concept de la transmission écrite de contenus historiques et culturels. Les sociétés occidentales utilisent le moyen de l'écriture, alors que les peuples autochtones préférèrent l'oralité bien qu'ils aient aussi une écriture pictographique. Pour les sciences occidentales, l'historiographie est l'élément le plus important pour prouver l'historicité d'un peuple. C'est une raison qui explique pourquoi les peuples sans écriture sont communément considérés comme anhistoriques par les sociétés scripturales.

et de la barbarie, signifiant donc le contraire de la civilisation. En revanche, en faisant usage du système scriptural occidental (auquel les 'sauvages' n'ont pas accès, mais exclusivement les êtres 'civilisés'), Assiniwi déconstruit cette opposition binaire propagée par le discours colonial. De même, Marie-Hélène Jeannotte explique que « […] certains énoncés empreints d'oralité renforcent l'idée de mélange des formes orales et écrites, notamment les répétitions et les formulations simples » (Jeannotte 2010, 301). Prenons à ce propos l'exemple de la figure rhétorique de l'anaphore qu'Assiniwi utilise souvent dans son écriture:

> *Chaque* arbre, *chaque* pierre et *chaque* ruisseau étaient connus de mon ancêtre, ALGONKIN ou IROQUOIEN.
> *Chaque* rivière, *chaque* sentier de mes forêts anciennes et actuelles étaient sillonnés et parcourus par celui qui, plus tard, servit de guide au découvreur européen. (Assiniwi 1973, t.1, 12, mon accentuation en italique)

Ensuite, la déclaration suivante porte sur un problème que Trigger appelle le *dilemme de l'historien* et que G. Sioui veut résoudre avec la méthode autohistorique:

> Les différences entre les sociétés de grande et de petite taille sont suffisamment importantes pour empêcher l'expérience et le jugement personnel d'un historien de comprendre, sans autre aide, les idées et les valeurs qui faisaient partie du mode de vie de l'Amérindien avant la venue des Européens. À moins que l'historien ne soit capable d'obtenir autrement une connaissance suffisante des croyances et des valeurs des gens qu'il étudie, il ne peut évaluer les sources européennes qui constituent les principaux témoignages que nous ayons au sujet de ces peuples. N'ayant pas cette connaissance, il lui est également impossible de transcender les préjugés et les limitations de ces sources et de les évaluer avec la rigueur nécessaire au traitement de tout matériel écrit. C'est précisément parce que la plupart des historiens n'ont pas cette connaissance que l'Amérindien ne prend pas vie dans leurs écrits, peu importe l'honnêteté ou la sympathie de l'historien à leur égard. Le dilemme de l'historien est donc l'inexistence d'une technique qui lui permettrait de comprendre les façons de voir de l'Amérindien, même s'il n'a pas laissé d'archives écrites. (Trigger cit. ds. G. Sioui 1999, 29-30, traduction libre de G. Sioui)

Selon Trigger, les historiens occidentaux n'ont aucune méthode adéquate pour évaluer et interpréter scientifiquement les documents écrits par des Européens et Canadiens-français au sujet de la population autochtone. En plus, l'absence des écrits amérindiens pose un grand problème aux historiens occidentaux parce qu'ils

n'ont aucune information de l'intérieur des peuples autochtones et pour ça, aucun accès à l'histoire et à la culture amérindiennes du point de vue autochtone. Par conséquent, une analyse comparative des deux optiques doit être laissée de côté avec la conséquence qu'une évaluation concluante, libre de préjugés soit impossible. De ce soi-disant *dilemme de l'historien* résulte l'opinion de G. Sioui que « la tradition amérindienne, orale et écrite, peut inspirer la création de nouvelles techniques et pallier l'absence d''archives écrites' » (G. Sioui 1999, 30). En incluant la tradition orale comme source reconnue dans sa méthode autohistorique, G. Sioui veut remédier à ce dilemme d'analyse scientifique.

Le but ultime des autohistoriens est d'établir leurs vérités, leurs versions de l'histoire en Amérique du Nord. É. Sioui souligne que la réécriture de l'histoire amérindienne est avant tout la manifestation du droit à la vérité ou, plus précisément, le « droit d'être » (É. Sioui 1972, 39; v. El Omari 2003, 136). Cela signifie que l'historiographie amérindienne affirme la présence et la persistance des peuples autochtones au Québec. Par conséquent, c'est un des moyens possibles pour atteindre la reconnaissance historique, politique et culturelle. En même temps, la présence amérindienne au Québec permet de dévoiler les stéréotypes et mythes inventés par les colonisateurs. Dans son article « Indigenous Knowledge Is Indigenous Empowerment, » Wilson parle de l'expérience coloniale que les peuples autochtones habitant le continent nord-américain ont subie:

> The colonizers taught us that the conquest and 'civilizing' of our people was inevitable; that we, too, must give way to 'progress.' It was hammered into our heads that our Indigenous cultural traditions were inferior to those of Euroamericans and Euro-Canadians, that there was nothing of value in our old ways, and that those ways were incompatible with modernity and civilization. (Wilson 2004, 360)

La déconstruction des théories occidentales de l'évolution sociale et de l'extinction inéluctable de l'Amérindien est une partie intégrale de la décolonisation (de l'académie). G. Sioui les démasque comme mythes inventés pour défendre, justifier et légitimer les projets explorateurs, colonisateurs, civilisateurs et assimilateurs en Amérique du Nord. En plus, en démontrant la survivance des peuples autochtones et la persistance de l'essence culturelle amérindienne, il prouve que les Amérindiens ne sont pas voués à disparaître. G. Sioui ajoute qu'il se « propose de démontrer la vitalité, l'universalité et l'utilité sociale actuelle et future du système des valeurs essentielles propres aux Amérindiens » (G. Sioui ds. Ricard 1991, 77). Avec ces propos, G. Sioui souligne indéniablement l'importance des savoirs autochtones et la valeur de la tradition orale pour le discours scientifique.

En plus, l'autoreprésentation permet aux Amérindiens de transmettre largement l'image qu'ils ont d'eux-mêmes et qui est conforme à leurs valeurs et leur vision. Malgré la nécessité de l'autoreprésentation amérindienne décrite plus haut, G. Sioui

explique que « très peu d'autochtones ont fait, jusqu'à présent [1991], l'effort d'identifier un terrain où puisse s'effectuer une rencontre de leur vision traditionnelle, transmise surtout par la tradition orale, et de l'Histoire telle que conçue par les Euro-Américains » (77). Évidemment, G. Sioui vise à créer ce lieu de rencontre avec son autohistoire. Si jusque là le lieu de la mémoire collective se fondait sur la tradition orale, il est désormais élargit par la création de l'autohistoire amérindienne. En effet, les témoignages oraux recensés par l'écriture permettent l'accès permanent aux savoirs autochtones autant que leur transmission permanente. Cela contribue d'un côté à ce que la compréhension et la communication interculturelles soient établies et facilitées, et à ce que les savoirs autochtones soient reconnus par et inclus dans le discours scientifique de l'autre.

Conclusion

En somme, la théorie autohistorique de Georges Sioui est, selon mes recherches, aujourd'hui bien connue dans les cercles universitaires québécois.[21] Ainsi, la question se pose de savoir pourquoi elle est, malheureusement, très peu étudiée et reconnue au Québec. Le genre et la méthode autohistoriques donnent une place aux Premières nations dans l'historiographie du Québec et, par extension, dans celle de l'Amérique du Nord et ils rendent visible les peuples autochtones habitant ces territoires. En outre, l'autoreprésentation permet aux Premières nations de faire connaître leurs savoirs, leur vision du monde, leur version du déroulement historique au Québec ainsi qu'une image plus réaliste de l'Amérindien. De cette façon, l'autohistoire amérindienne est un espace où les valeurs et les savoirs autochtones sont respectés. La tradition orale est ainsi hautement revalorisée, car elle est reconnue comme source valable dans l'historiographie autochtone et elle occupe une place exceptionnelle dans les écrits amérindiens. Après la mise à l'écrit, les historiens, les universitaires et, plus généralement, le public (tous autochtones ou non autochtones) ont accès aux récits et aux savoirs transmis oralement auparavant. En prenant en compte l'oralité et en étant un contre-récit qui conteste le discours colonial, l'autohistoire amérindienne propose une alternative à la vision des écrits non autochtones. Bien que ces derniers fussent souvent très restrictifs et partiaux, ces documents constituèrent longtemps les seules sources consultées pour étudier les événements historiques s'étant déroulés au Québec. Pour ces motifs, la réécriture de l'histoire du point de vue amérindien veut non seulement déconstruire la partialité

21 Lors d'un séjour de recherche sur l'autohistoire amérindienne, effectué au Québec et en Ontario en 2014, j'ai parlé avec une vingtaine de professeurs et chercheurs (autochtones et non autochtones) faisant partie de plusieurs disciplines, comme l'histoire, l'anthropologie, les lettres et la sociologie. La théorie de Georges Sioui était, sans exemption, connue à toutes ces personnes.
Je voudrais profiter de cette occasion de remercier la GKS ainsi que la famille Saβe (et en particulier Freia Saβe) pour leur soutien financier. Je remercie également mes interlocuteurs qui m'ont accueilli très chaleureusement et qui ont partagé leurs connaissances avec moi.

du discours scientifique occidental, mais aussi introduire les savoirs autochtones à l'académie afin de créer une balance entre les différents systèmes de savoir. Il faut, quand même, signaler le danger d'une exploitation ou d'une appropriation intellectuelle du savoir autochtone par des chercheurs occidentaux. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, par exemple, n'est qu'une de plusieurs critiques autochtones qui exprime des craintes à ce sujet (v. Simpson 2004).

Heureusement, les sciences humaines au Québec ont évolué pendant les cinq dernières décennies et l'intérêt aux contre-récits amérindiens augmente. Bien que l'anthropologue québécois Louis-Jacques Dorais se plaigne que la « non-pertinence des Autochtones en tant que partenaires scientifiques constitue, hélas, une tradition bien ancrée dans les sciences humaines au Québec francophone » (Dorais 2002, 206), quelques chercheurs non autochtones font des efforts de publier des livres portant sur l'histoire des Premières nations qui évitent des représentations stéréotypées et défigurées et qui tentent de considérer aussi la perspective amérindienne. Les pionniers dans ce domaine sont sans doute Bruce G. Trigger ayant publié *The Children of Aataentsic* en 1976 et Denys Delâge qui publia *Le pays renversé* en 1985.

Puis, lentement, mais sûrement, les études autochtones font leur entrée dans l'académie québécoise. Cependant, comparé au Canada anglais, le discours critique autochtone au Québec et son intégration dans l'académie sont « encore à une étape antérieure » (Gatti 2004, 23), ou, comme Armand Garnet Ruffo le dit: « […] the study of Native literature in Quebec is still in its infant stage when compared to the surge of interest in English Canada » (Ruffo 2010, 113). Malgré le fait que l'autohistoire amérindienne est généralement associée à la science de l'histoire, les publications autohistoriques en forme d'essais historiques, politiques ou autobiographiques sont, comme l'explique Maurizio Gatti dans son anthologie de la *Littérature amérindienne du Québec*, caractéristiques des débuts de l'écriture autochtone et font donc partie du corpus de la littérature amérindienne au Québec (v. Gatti 2004, 22).

Tout compte fait, l'autohistoire amérindienne du Québec représente une forme indispensable de savoirs autochtones relatifs à l'histoire et aux cultures autochtones. En plus, elle présente tous les aspects nécessaires pour, premièrement, concilier les savoirs autochtones et le discours scientifique et, deuxièmement, contribuer à « amérindianiser » l'académie.

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Katja Sarkowsky

"This is why I'm remembering": Narrative Agency and Autobiographical Knowledge in Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed* and Joy Harjo's *Crazy Brave*

Abstract

Indigenous life writing, particularly by women, provides a challenge to the academic study of autobiography and to the understanding of autobiographical knowledge. Using the examples of Maria Campbell's Halfbreed *(1973) and Joy Harjo's* Crazy Brave *(2012), I look at how notions of self, community, and autobiographical knowledge are negotiated in contemporary autobiographies by Indigenous women, and argue that autobiographers productively draw on and produce different forms of cultural knowledge – about self, about community, about responsibility – in and through narrative in an act that I call with Mackenzie "narrative agency". Thus, I read these texts not only as examples for the presentation of the individual writer's knowledge about self and her life, but also of knowledge as to the different ways of telling a life and thereby as a critical reminder of how notions of autobiographical knowledge are culturally embedded and produced.*

Résumé

Les récits de vie autochtones, et particulièrement ceux composés par des femmes, constituent un défi pour l'étude académique d'autobiographies et pour la compréhension de savoirs autobiographiques. En utilisant deux œuvres comme exemple, Halfbreed *de Maria Campbell (1973) et* Crazy Brave *de Joy Harjo (2012), j'examine comment les notions de soi, de la communauté et du savoir autobiographique sont présentées et discutées dans les autobiographies contemporaines de femmes autochtones et j'argumente que les autobiographes incluent et produisent des formes différentes de savoirs culturels – concernant le soi, la communauté et la responsabilité – dans et à travers un acte narratif que j'appellerai, en référence à Mackenzie, «action narrative (narrative agency) ». C'est pourquoi je lis ces textes non seulement comme exemples de présentation du savoir individuel des auteures sur elles-mêmes et sur leurs vies, mais aussi comme exemple pour leurs connaissances concernant les manières diverses de raconter une vie et comme un rappel critique du fait que les savoirs et les connaissances autobiographiques sont ancrés culturellement et produits par elle.*

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And what happened, I wondered, if you read and took in every book in every library of the world, learned the name of every seashell, every war, and could quote every line of poetry? What would you do with all that knowing? Would it be the kind of knowledge that could free you? […] And who decided what knowledge was important to know and understand? (Harjo 2012, 72)

1. Indigenous Life Writing and the Production of Knowledge

"At the dawn of the twenty-first century," argues Dakota scholar Angela Cavender Wilson (Waziyatawin), "the recovery of Indigenous knowledge is a conscious and systematic effort to revalue that which has been denigrated and revive that which has been destroyed" (Wilson 2004, 359). Wilson focuses on knowledge production in fields such as anthropology, history, law, medicine, and the environmental sciences, highlighting the ethical and political implications of academic practices in light of their colonial heritage. The revaluation of Indigenous forms of knowledge and the critical investigation of what counts as academic knowledge and theory is, for her and many others, crucial to the ongoing project of decolonization in North America.

Yet Wilson's critical reminder of the potentially colonial implications of academic knowledge production also applies to literary and cultural studies. The initial quotation by Mvskoke (Creek) poet and musician Joy Harjo asks what knowledge is, can be, what kind of functions it might have and who defines what counts as knowledge; it points to the very connection between knowledge and power emphasized by Foucault. Harjo integrates these crucial questions into her memoir, thus implicitly also asking what role knowledge production plays for the narrative construction of an individual life. Taking this as my starting point, I will look at the question of how the discourses of the study of autobiography relate to both the study of Indigenous women's life writing, and to the production of categories of autobiographical knowledge in Indigenous women's self-narratives in particular. In the context of settler colonialism, Indigenous life stories, and the control over these stories, have stressed the importance of Indigenous voices as expressing specific experiences, thus presenting themselves as counter-models to stereotypical representations and hegemonic narratives of nation. Indigenous writing and women's autobiographies have played a particularly important role here, as they question both ethnicized and gendered assumptions about the subject and her/his relation to national and other communities. They also question how the autobiographical subject relating (or refusing to relate) to the nation as well as to other collectives is constituted, how primary the nation state is in comparison to other communities – such as Indigenous nations – and how relationality not only to other people but also to the environment or spiritual frameworks impacts the narrative construction of self.

The very notion of narrative identity is at stake in this context, in the struggle for voice as an 'authentic' expression and testimony. Current notions of autobiography as constructions rather than unadulterated expressions of self could potentially be

seen as undermining the political claims implicit in Indigenous women's life writing, claims that appear to rest crucially on a notion of authentic experience and its expression in narrative. Thus, Indigenous life writing provides a challenge to the academic study of autobiography and to the understanding of autobiographical knowledge. These challenges, I want to suggest, concern at least three closely related aspects: the form of what is understood as 'autobiography;' the understanding of the self as relational; and the notion of responsibility in Indigenous life narratives.

My two examples will be Métis writer and activist Maria Campbell's groundbreaking autobiography *Halfbreed* (1973) and Joy Harjo's recent memoir *Crazy Brave* (2012). These texts differ significantly in a number of crucial aspects: the setting (the Canadian West and the US American Mid- and Southwest, respectively), the tribal background of the authors, the time of publication, and the ages of these writers at time of publication. While Campbell wrote *Halfbreed* in her early thirties and became known to a broader audience through the book, Harjo wrote her memoir in her early sixties, already a distinguished poet and well-known musician. The ways in which memories are organized and presented differ significantly; while Campbell presents her life story chronologically within a framework of the narrating I looking back onto her life, expressing what Rachael McLennan in reference to Smith and Watson has called the "autobiographical occasion" (2010, 13), Harjo's narrative is, despite its discernible chronology, much more associative, integrating not only flashbacks but also poetry. At the same time, these very different texts also display a number of parallels that make it worthwhile reading them together in light of autobiographical form, the relationality of self, and the responsibility of autobiographical narration: both women tell a story of establishing agency and of survival of violent abuse and both women use their life narratives to reflect on alternative productions of knowledge as crucial to that survival.

In this contribution, I will look at each of these points as potential challenges to the understanding of autobiographical knowledge. By autobiographical knowledge, I refer not only to an individual's knowledge of him- or herself and his or her life, but also to the integration of different forms of knowledge into the self-narrative, as well as the cultural knowledge of how to narrate and read one's life. Narrative, knowledge, and self are thus connected by what I would like to call with Catriona Mackenzie "narrative agency," even though my understanding of the term differs somewhat from hers. For Mackenzie, narrative agency refers to the conception of personhood; to be person, she writes, "is to exercise narrative capacities for self-interpretation that unify our lives over time," a self-interpretation that is an integral response to experiences of change and fragmentation, and as such "dynamic, provisional, and open to change and revision" (2008, 11-12). I share Mackenzie's understanding of "narrative agency" as interlinked with notions of personhood and self; however, in her conception, narrative agency is also always bound to a normative understanding of what constitutes a good life and to a successful narrative of that life. My own use of the term is descriptive rather than normative and refers to

an individual's capacity for narrative self-*construction* in a complex web of cultural understandings of self and conventions of life writing and life telling, as well as of careful self-positioning vis-à-vis environment, family, community, society, and other collectives.

2. Negotiating Self, Life, and Writing: Indigenous Autobiography

The need to expand what is to be understood as 'autobiography' has become obvious in the study of Indigenous life writing in the past 30 years. Arnold Krupat, a scholar who has been among the earliest critics to address these issues systematically, has defined autobiography as a European, even a Eurocentric genre. He has argued that, since "the rise of the author parallels the rise of the individual" (Krupat 1985, 10) in European culture, autobiography has no equivalent in pre-contact tribal cultures, as these cultures have no sense of the kind of autonomous individual underlying the traditional notion of autobiography (11). Native American autobiography thus "could emerge only from cross-cultural contact" (Eakin 1985, xviii). Krupat and Swann confirm this view in their collection of autobiographical essays by Indigenous authors two years later, when they point to the difficulties approaching authors, and even the refusal by some of these authors, to produce an autobiographical sketch:

> One Native American poet was cautioned against writing her autobiography by a member of her tribe and could not, finally, produce an autobiographical text for us, asserting the traditional sense of Indian peoples that not the individual as personal self but, rather, the person as transmitter of the traditional culture was what most deeply counted for her. Another poet initially rejected the idea of what she called 'speaking your own stories,' though she later found that she could write some kind of autobiography. (Krupat and Swann 1987, xii)

"Some kind of autobiography" is a telling way to put it, for there appears to be an implicit understanding of what constitutes an 'autobiography,' and the narrative that was finally produced conformed at least to a degree to the conventions of this genre. So while Krupat and Swann meant to highlight the different cultural understandings of self that allowed for or prevented the writing of an autobiography, in effect they also illustrate the cultural specificity of the genre's definition. Hertha Wong has remarked on the tendency of scholars in the field to focus on collaborative autobiographies of the 19th and early 20th centuries, and thus to draw reductive conclusions on Native American life writing on that limited basis:

> Because Western definitions of autobiography have been applied to indigenous personal narratives, some scholars have concluded that Indian

> autobiography did not exist prior to European contact. But Native American autobiographical expressions are not based on Euro-American notions of self, life, or writing. Before the arrival of Europeans, indigenous people had numerous oral and pictographic forms in which to share their personal narratives. Certainly, these narratives were told in different forms, with different emphases, for different audiences and purposes, but they *were* told. (Wong 1992, 12)

More recently and along similar lines of argument Métis scholar Deanne Reder has highlighted, in her discussion and repudiation of Krupat's assumption, that the kind of autobiography Krupat refers to – a written, single-authored attempt to coherently capture an individual life – is a reductive notion of autobiography, that denies other forms of life writing (and life speaking) the status of 'real' autobiographies (1985, 156). As Paul John Eakin has cautioned: "armed with our own notions of what 'a life per se' is, what a 'story of individuation' is, we may not necessarily recognize another culture's practice of identity narrative as such when we encounter it" (1999, 74). This may be obvious for life narratives that follow cultural scripts fundamentally differing from those of the recipient, but it holds true also for examples of the genre that with regard to form and content have grown out of transcultural encounters, written – as the single-authored examples discussed in this contribution – in a recognizable Euro-American tradition, while embedding the text in a web of Indigenous cultural references constitutive for a multiplicity of layers of autobiographical knowledge.

In this contribution, I will continue to use the term 'autobiography' for the texts under discussion. While the heritage of the autonomous Enlightenment individual without doubt appears to make this a problematic term in an Indigenous context, I will follow McLennan's emphasis on the importance of understanding the three components of autobiography not as the sum of self-life-writing, assuming a stable meaning of each term over time and across cultural contexts, but rather as a term that demands an exploration of the ever-shifting relations between these components, which differ in each individual case (McLennan 2013, 6). At the same time, I want to argue that the way in which the relations between these components are negotiated in the individual examples nevertheless references specific conventions of life writing and notions of the self.[1] By so doing (and thus exercising what I have called narrative agency), the autobiographical subject positions herself not only individually, but also politically and culturally. This self-positioning is not necessarily coherent or stable, but neither is it arbitrary; in Indigenous autobiographies in par-

1 This is particularly complicated in the context of collaborative texts, an important genre in Aboriginal life writing. For an in-depth discussion of questions of collaboration, authorship, voice, and agency see Sophie McCall's excellent study *First Person Plural* (2011).

ticular, it presents a crucial component of positioning the subject as 'Indigenous' at some times, as specifically 'Mvskoke,' 'Métis,' 'Anishinaabe' etc.

Both Campbell's and Harjo's texts clearly investigate both the trajectory of an individual life and the trajectory of "writing a life," thus contributing to the questions of genre and the production of knowledge. I suggest that Campbell, by way of narrative structure, highlights the necessity of reading an individual life in a communal context, thus urging the reader to read her life story on the one hand as representative (at least for the life stories of Métis women), on the other hand as individual, only understandable, 'knowable,' in the context of the history of the Métis people and their conflict-ridden relationship to the majority population. In contrast, Harjo structurally highlights another aspect of life writing: by foregrounding the role of poetry and music not only on the level of plot, but also by making poetry an integral part of the memoir's structure, she offers the associative and metaphorical power of poetry as a crucial component of producing knowledge about a particular life as well as knowledge about the intricacies of writing, telling a life.

Individual History and Community: Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed*

Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed* presents not one, but two beginnings: the 'Introduction,' in which the autobiographical narrator's return to a place is documented, and the changes of this place – including the emotional impact of these changes on the narrating I – are recorded; and a rendering of the history of the Métis and the Riel rebellion in which a community's history is claimed as part of the autobiographical narrator's life story, without which it cannot be appropriately understood. The narrator 'zooms in' onto her own life, starting with the larger social framework of the Métis as a cultural group. Chapter one sketches the history of the Métis from their move to Manitoba in the early 19th century to their military defeat at Batoche, SK in 1884. The second chapter focuses on the Métis after their having to give up their life as hunters, and creates a story of a proud people descending into poverty, alcoholism, and desperation. But it also begins to connect this story to the narrator's family's story, and eventually to her own; the individual's story, Campbell suggests, is not understandable without this collective framework.

Like many Indigenous life narratives – including fictional ones – of the 1970s, Campbell's highlights the centrality of return to place and community for the individual and thus rejects a narrative convention of individuation, in which the individual requires a leave-taking from the community in order to mature, a pattern of narrative that William Bevis has referred to as 'homing-in' (1987).[2] This return, however, is not only central with regard to what is being told but also how and why. Campbell uses the story of her return to the place of her childhood to reflect upon the telling of her life that follows the Introduction, justifying the life narration of a

2 See also Lutz 1989.

woman just over the age of thirty. As a peritext in Genette's sense, situating the narrative, as Smith and Watson explain, "by constructing the audience and inviting a particular politics of reading" (2010, 101), the Introduction is a constitutive part of the self-narrative. The final passage of the Introduction presents a realization that will shape the reader's perception of everything to come. Campbell writes:

> Going home after so long a time, I thought that I might find again the happiness and beauty I had known as a child. But as I walked down the rough dirt road, poked through the broken old buildings and thought back over the years, I realized that I could never find that here. Like me the land had changed, my people were gone, and if I was to know peace I would have to search within myself. That is when I decided to write about my life. (1982, 7-8)

Here, the text provides a reflection on the possibilities of writing one's life. Life writing is not only a way of individually coming to terms with a history of dispossession and the experience of violence, but it presents a way of coming to terms with the impossibility of return and thus both supports and at the same time counters a narrative convention of Indigenous (life) writing. Crucial for this text as an autobiography is the 'autoethnographic' gesture in the sense defined by Smith and Watson, that is, as characterized by "its focus on the *ethnos*, or social group […] rather than on the *bios* or individual life" (2010, 157). The very structure of an individualized introduction, followed by a narrative process of 'zooming-in' from the Métis via her family history to herself positions the autobiographical subject in a context of community narration.

Thus, the Introduction and the first two chapters circumscribe a social and historical context before the third chapter finally begins with "I was born …" (1982, 19). They are necessary to establish the speaking position as authenticating a particular voice as representative: the voice of an activist with an obligation to tell her story not as a form of individual self-expression but – the structure suggests – out of an obligation to 'her people' to make her story heard as representative of the story of 'the Métis' generally and 'Métis women' in particular. As such, the text does not only narrate an individual life; it also reflects a narrative pattern that can also be found in Native fiction of the 1960s and 1970s: frustration and desperation that make the protagonist leave the community, followed by a further descent into hell and abuse, and finally a return to the community and a new beginning.

Life (Writing) and Poetry: Joy Harjo's *Crazy Brave*

In *Crazy Brave,* poetry is both content and structure for the life narrative. On the one hand, the memoir presents the autobiographical narrator as a 'poet in becoming,' by highlighting the centrality of art as a means of survival. Being or becoming a

poet here is not understood as living out a particular talent for personal satisfaction or as a desperate need for creative self-expression, even though facets of the latter are apparent; being a poet is presented as a way of life with a strong spiritual component and as a personal obligation of remembering, witnessing, and truth-telling. On the other hand, by incorporating poems as constitutive elements of the life narrative and by using poetry as a structural device, Harjo's autobiography also explores the role of poetry as a potential repository of cultural and autobiographical knowledge.

Poetry literally frames the text: it begins with a quote from Harjo's "The Woman Who Fell from the Sky" as a kind of prologue and it ends with an emphasis on poetry as a teacher: "I followed poetry" (2012, 164) is the last sentence of the narrative. Throughout the text, Harjo's poems are used to introduce sections of the memoir, and particularly towards the end, the citations become more extensive. While reference to or quotations from Harjo's poetry is, of course, anything but surprising in a poet's memoir, I want to suggest that the strategy of including poems is far more than an expected illustration of the story of a poetic career. Rather, the poems increasingly become an integral part of the narrative, not so much as telling a life but reflecting upon life and its storied character.

This is particularly prominent at the very end of the memoir. While most of the quotations from poems are excerpts, "I Give You Back," a central piece in Harjo's early collection *She Had Some Horses* (1983; it later was often cited as "Fear Poem"), is quoted in its entirety. It is a poem of release, a ritual cleansing of fear. The structure of the first stanza is representative:

> I release you, my beautiful and terrible
> fear. I release you. You were my beloved
> and hated twin, but now, I don't know you
> as myself. I release you with all the
> pain I would know at the death of
> my children. (1982, 162)

The ambivalence of fear as both internal and to be externalized finds its powerful manifestation in the poem's enjambments. At the same time, the poem is a form of testimony: "I was born with eyes that can never close" (162). Testimony and witnessing ascribe responsibility to the one testifying; testimony is never for its own sake, but is meant to make others see and act.

The witnessing of atrocities in this poem (rape, slaughter, starvation) and the internalization of fear are directly linked. This link is highlighted by the way in which the poem is placed in the overall life narrative, for it is positioned to mark a point of the autobiographical narrator's liberation from fear: in the context of the memoir, the poem is performative, it enacts what it describes. It follows the description of her struggle with her inner monster, a mixture of mythically imbued struggle and

nightmarish dream, and a dream vision of her future (or, from the point in time of writing, her present) as a poet and musician:

> The monster put his hand on me. It did not touch me. He disappeared. I was free. Free. Free. I carried that dream back through several layers of consciousness, to where I stood in the future, with a stack of poems and a saxophone in my hands. That night I wrote this poem. It is one of my first poems. (Harjo 2012, 161)

While this passage connects the poetic beginning to a crucial moment in the life narrative, the focus is nevertheless only secondarily on the beginning of writing poetry. The emphasis is on the connection between the liberation from fear and the possibilities of poetry for one's life. While highly personal, it is the contextualization in the life narrative that gives this lyrical poem an autobiographical twist, but the overall agenda of the poem nevertheless exceeds the individual. As Monika Fludernik has argued, in lyric poetry

> [T]he speaker never becomes a character in her own right, never begins to exist in an alternative fictional world. Indeed, lyric poetry is generally taken to be concerned with general truths rather than particular fact. (Fludernik in Kjerkegaard 2014, 188)

"I Give You Back" seeks to create precisely the kind of relation to broader 'truths' highlighted by Fludernik. The 'I' that is in dialogue with fear is an I that can be seen as individual, but also as encompassing all Native Americans. If the emphasis is read as being on the liberation from a fear that is both individual and transmitted across generations, the poem potentially implies an invitation to each and every reader as a human being struggling with fear. The references and some of the formal aspects (such as the repetitions, the importance of the number '4' etc.) point to Native American life realities and aesthetics. The context is autobiographical, but the emphasis on taking oneself back, on not letting oneself surrender to one's fear, clearly encompasses a broader (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) audience. Harjo suggests this reading in one of the paragraphs following the poem when she writes: "There are many such doorways in our lives" (163). 'We' here is potentially generalized across the boundaries of ethnicity, gender, or age, a generalization implied, but not made explicit in the poem.

Thus, the use of poetry does not only serve to comment on a particular life situation; it also becomes a vehicle for transporting the autobiographical I's reflection on how life can be understood. The lines "I take myself back, fear./ You are not my shadow any longer" (163) at this particular point in the life narrative provide a commentary on how to narrate oneself – the very words are a reclamation of life, and this life is embedded in a larger context of story. The final sentence of the

memoir, "I followed poetry" (164), is not therefore to be understood merely as an indication of the beginning of a poetic career – the point where Harjo's narrative ends – but as indicating her understanding of poetry as an interpretation of a connected life: "I wanted the intricate and metaphorical language of my ancestors to pass through to my language, my life" (164), Harjo writes. Life is storied. Kenneth Roemer has argued in his reading of Navajo songs as autobiographical that the merging of song and identity is central in the understanding of these songs as well as of the notion of self that lies beneath it; without song, there is no existence, songs *are* existence (Roemer 2012, 96-97). Roemer speaks about traditional Navajo songs, but "I Give You Back" – in light of the strong influence Navajo thought and culture have had on Harjo's poetry – might be read as resting on a similar connection between song, story, poetry, and self.

Thus, if "I Give You Back" is understood as a 'representative example' for how Harjo's poetry functions in her memoir, the poems do not only comment on particular life situations or even turning points, but they are an integral, even constitutive part of 'making sense' of the autobiographical narrator's life. They function as a self-citation, a self-reference, through which a notion of being one's song, songs and poetry as a form of both autobiography and autobiographical knowledge is confirmed.

Both the function of poetry in *Crazy Brave* and Campbell's structure do not call into question the status of the texts as 'autobiographies;' neither text provides a challenge to the genre through its form, as for instance Leslie Marmon Silko's *Storyteller* does. But the characteristics just discussed nevertheless negotiate the relationship between self, life, and writing for, as different as they are, they both put the writing of an individual life in a larger context of community and ways of narrating community relations. Thus, they also point to the second aspect under discussion here: the relationality of self.

3. "We enter into a family story:" Relational Selves

The conception of a relational instead of an independent self, by now well-established in autobiographical research, is at least to some extent the result of the challenges posed to the so-called 'Gusdorf model' by the growing number of autobiographical narratives by individuals belonging to or identifying with marginalized groups, particularly since the 1960s and 1970s. In this context, Indigenous self-narratives occupy a special position with a long history of colonial dispossession and a persistent claim to narrative agency; this history is shaped by the complex and tension-filled interplay of oral and written modes of life narratives. This is particularly obvious in collaborative autobiographies, in which the autobiographical self is – literally – constructed dialogically and most often in a constellation of power asymmetry. Collaborative autobiographies raise specific questions regarding agency and relationality (cf. Eakin 1985, xxi), a detailed discussion of which exceeds the

scope of this contribution. However, the function of relationality for narrative self-construction and the different forms it takes play a crucial role for Indigenous autobiographies and for the challenge they potentially present to the understanding of autobiographical knowledge.

Arnold Krupat has argued that in Native American life writing or telling, "narration of personal history is more nearly marked by the individual's sense of himself in relation to collective units or groupings" (1992, 212); he calls this a 'synecdochic' sense of self as opposed to a 'metonymic' sense of self "where personal accounts have marked the individual's sense of herself predominantly in relation to other distinct individuals" (1992, 212). While the assumption of a sense of a Native American self that is necessarily and transhistorically 'synecdochic' is problematic, Indigenous autobiographical narratives indeed tend to stress relations and the social as crucial for narrative self-constitution. As such, they highlight an emphatic and affirmative understanding of the importance of the social for the way in which the self is understood and narrated.

Thus I am not concerned with psychological models of self-constitution that stress the fundamental difference of Indigenous conceptions of self from European conceptions, but instead with specific narrative conventions that emphasize the relationality of self and that make a relational form of life narrative comprehensible in a particular cultural context. Familiar narrative strategies include a tendency towards episodic structure, oral narration, a strong focus on the self as embedded in a genealogy and tribal mythology, and an emphasis not only on the importance of other people and of human community for the individual's self-understanding and positioning (this, obviously, can frequently be found in non-Indigenous life narratives as well), but extending the notion of relationality to encompass human relations to e.g. animals, rocks, trees, or spiritual beings as both an individual and a community relation. In this context, the particular structure of Campbell's text as well as Harjo's understanding of poetry as a bridge between worlds can also be understood as emphases on the relationality of self, for the very structure of self-narration lays claim to a particular cultural tradition and places the autobiographical subject within it.

In the following discussion of Campbell's and Harjo's texts, I will focus on a particular narrative strategy by way of which the relational construction of self is put into narrative practice: the presentation of one particular person as an embodiment of genealogy and tribal culture. In Campbell's text, this is the paternal great-grandmother Cheechum, with whose death the autobiographical narrative concludes. In Harjo's, it is the father, a tragic figure who comes to stand both for a whole generation of Indigenous men in the US in the 1950s and for a connection to a heroic tribal past. These embodiments come to bear very differently on the two self-narratives and are to very different degrees ambivalent in what they (re)present; nevertheless, in each case they remind the narrator of a context of self-knowledge that is dependent upon a specific cultural context and relationality.

Of Grandmothers and Lost Fathers: Relationality and Embodiment

In *Halfbreed*, the narrator's paternal great-grandmother Cheechum embodies traditional values as well as the perseverance of the Métis in the face of a history of dispossession and cultural marginalization. Fagan et al. point out that Campbell "politicizes her kinship ties, linking herself through her great-grandmother, Cheechum, to the Métis people led by Louis Riel in the Rebellions of 1869 and 1884" (Fagan 2009, 259). As such, Cheechum is for the autobiographical narrator not only the one stable person in her life, but she also presents an internalized set of cultural values and behavioral standards *and* a political and historical claim to sovereignty.

In presenting her great-grandmother as a guardian of Métis identity and cultural practice, the narrator does not stop short at the severity and violence of this guardianship. When at one point the young protagonist directs her frustration at her parents, calling them "no-good halfbreeds," Cheechum takes her aside and tells her a story about the destructiveness of community division and then proceeds to punish the girl.

> She stood up then and said, 'I will beat you each time I hear you talk as you did. If you don't like what you have, then stop fighting your parents and do something about it yourself.' With that she beat me until my legs and arms were swollen with welts. (1982, 47)

As this act of violence makes clear, Cheechum is not a person without ambivalences. Nevertheless, the corporal punishment does not diminish her function as a crucial relation. On the contrary, the narrator comments on this episode by saying (without a sense of irony) "My first real lesson had been learnt" (47), suggesting in the following that the 'lesson' is indeed the one Cheechum wanted her to learn.

While representing the values of traditional society, the great-grandmother nevertheless is an embodiment of hope for a different future. It is structurally important that the memoir ends with Cheechum's death in 1966, for it signals the advent of a new generation of Métis, an advent that Cheechum appears to have waited for:

> Cheechum lived to be a hundred and four years old, and perhaps it's just as well that she died with a feeling of hope for our people; that she didn't share the disillusionment that I felt about the way things turned out. My Cheechum never surrendered at Batoche: she only accepted what she considered a dishonourable truce. She waited all her life for a new generation of people who would make this country a better place to live in. (156)

Cheechum comes to stand for the unbreakable spirit of the Métis; the reference to Batoche, the place of the decisive battle that ended organized Métis military re-

sistance in 1884, invites a defiant redefinition of its meaning: the Métis have not been broken, and the military defeat was only one of many instances in the illegitimate seizing of territory and the push to assimilate. The narrator is part of the new generation her great-grandmother foresaw, a generation willing to work for fundamental change. The ending of the book project is also a new beginning for her: "The years of searching, loneliness and pain are over for me. Cheechum said, 'You'll find yourself, and you'll find brothers and sisters.' I have brothers and sisters, all over the country. I no longer need my blanket to survive" (157). The process of 'finding herself' is the very telling of her life-story; not only in *what* is told but maybe even more so *that* it is told. *Halfbreed* has often been read as story of survival, and the autobiographical narrator's relationship to Cheechum is crucial. It is one of an internalized dialogue between the autobiographical narrator and her great-grandmother, and as constitutive for the narrative construction of self in that it becomes a lens through which to observe and evaluate the narrator's development and her eventual opening up for new exchanges and directions in life. This dialogicity can be extended to encompass the very production of knowledge at work in this and other texts. As Dylan Miner has emphasized, knowledge is not static but "dependent upon active community reception" (170). In Campbell's narrative, the figure of the great-grandmother serves as a representative for this community, or more precisely, for the community as it once was. At the same time, the kind of knowledge she represents and which the autobiographical narrator references as a framework of values is passed on and received in the next step by the audience of the book.

In Harjo's memoir, while the strategy of embodiment is similar, the figure of the father plays a role that differs significantly from that of Cheechum. While Cheechum represents continuity, strength, and cultural persistence in *Halfbreed*, the narrator's father in *Crazy Brave* comes to stand for the loss of orientation experienced by Indigenous men in the 1940s and 1950s. "My father didn't know what he wanted," Harjo writes. "If he was going to have a child, he preferred a son, though in his everyday world in the racist Oklahoma of the fifties, it was difficult for an Indian man, especially one who had no living Indian father or grandfather to show him the way" (2012, 20). The desperate, lost father embodies the predicament of an entire generation of Indigenous men during a time where the official policy, so-called 'termination,' was an attempt to end the special relationship between the government and Indigenous nations and integrate Native American men in particular into the postwar economic boom – with disastrous results for both individuals and communities. For the historian Roger Nichols, the policy even presented a clear continuation of the policies of annihilation in the 19th century, if by different means (1998, 292). The men described in *Crazy Brave* react to their state of powerlessness with alcohol abuse and intimate partner and self-inflicted violence, as well as child abuse. The narrative makes no attempt to gloss over Harjo's father's (self-)destructiveness, but places it clearly in the context of the historical conquest of Native North America and its effect upon the present. "These fathers, boyfriends, and husbands were all

men we loved, and were worthy of love," she writes. "As peoples we had been broken. We were still in the bloody aftermath of a violent takeover of our lands. […] We were all haunted" (2012, 158). The shift in pronouns in this passage points to a process of 'postmemorization', to reference Marianne Hirsch's concept of postmemory in this context. Postmemory, as Hirsch defined it, is

> the relationship of children of survivors of cultural or collective trauma to the experiences of their parents, experiences that they 'remember' only as the narratives and images with which they grew up, but that are so powerful, so monumental, as to constitute memories in their own right. (2001, 9)

Analogously, the memory of conquest, war, and destruction so prominent also in the previously discussed poem "I Give You Back" is a transgenerational memory that serves as a matrix for the interpretation of contemporary experiences. The narrator's father, belonging to a generation no longer grounded in tribal traditions and not yet politicized in the way the next generation would be, comes to stand for a community experience.

At the same time, the father's loss of way is connected to the narrator's own attempt to find her place:

> I am born of brave people and we were in need of warriors. My father and I had lost the way. I was born puny and female and Indian in lands that were stolen. Many of the people were forgetting the songs and stories. Yet others hid out and carried the fire of the songs and stories so we could continue the culture. (Harjo 2012, 28)

Passages such as this assign to the figure of the father yet another function: although he has lost any sense of orientation, he nevertheless provides the autobiographical narrator's connection to tribal history. It is through her father's Mvskoke family that she traces her ancestry, and this ancestry is celebrated as one of insistence on cultural and political self-determination.

This kind of ancestry, the narrator emphasizes, is more than nostalgic identification with a lost tribal world and its values; rather, it becomes an individual responsibility. The title of this contribution – "this is why I'm remembering" – is taken from Harjo's memoir. As in Campbell's memoir, the declaration of autobiographical motivation is more than a justification for the telling of a life-story; the text is staged as a form of testimony. Unlike Campbell's memoir, however, Harjo's *Crazy Brave* does not present the autobiographical narrator as the representative of a community. She does not stand as 'a Native woman' for Indigenous women in North America (or even a particular tribal community), but as an individual with a responsibility that binds her to and defines her through her connection to community, genealogy, and family.

The differences between the way in which a similar strategy is used in both texts – the function of a central relation as an embodiment of community experience through which the narrator then defines herself – are most likely attributable to the different historical contexts in which the two memoirs have been published. Campbell's was published in the wake of Métis activism in the early 1970s and at the beginning of a visible Indigenous literature in Canada, while Harjo's comes in the context of diversified tribal politics, the institutionalization of Indigenous Studies in the academy, and a well-established Indigenous literature in the United States (to which her poetry has significantly contributed) forty years later. *Halfbreed* has become a classic since its publication, a culturally and politically important text which has served as a crucial encouragement to many Indigenous writers (Acoose qt. in Million 2009, 59), while *Crazy Brave,* as a very recent text, currently draws the interest it generates from the prominence of its author. Thus, in the final section of this contribution, I will briefly discuss the notions of responsibility taken up in the texts and the ways in which the forms of knowledge they reference and produce are linked to the narrative agency enacted in the memoirs.

4. "I write this for all of you": Autobiographical narration and responsibility

Halfbreed is considered a "watershed for Native literature" and a "standard" (qt. in Fagan et al. 2009, 258). By now, it is firmly included in both school and university curricula. Much of the criticism of the text has focused on the construction of identity, and while this dominant reading is not surprising for an autobiographical narrative, this focus has also been criticized as too narrow. For Miner, "Campbell's body of work is about being, becoming, and belonging, not about the ambiguities of hybrid identities" (2012, 162), even though the identifications formed in the texts tend to shift and blur identity boundaries (cf. Fagan et al.). I read this autobiographical narrative as a self-conscious testimony with an intense political agenda that is less concerned with identity categories than with telling a story of individual survival as one of community survival and continuity. The memoir's emplotment, its already discussed structure that leads from a political and self-reflexive framing to a 'zooming in' from community and family history to individual story, highlights this particular agenda. In the Introduction as well as towards the end of the narrative, the autobiographical narrator addresses the reader directly:

> I am not very old, so perhaps some day, when I too am a grannie, I will write more. I write this for all of you, to tell you what it is like to be a Halfbreed woman in our country. I want to tell you about the joys and sorrows, the oppressing poverty, the frustrations and the dreams. (Campbell 1982, 8)

This address is both conciliatory and confrontational: it creates a 'we' – 'our country' – but it also emphasizes the political and didactic function of the text. The implied audience in this passage is most likely not Indigenous (or at least not comprised of Indigenous *women*), but presumably a 'national' audience that needs to be educated. The text as such, however, clearly has offered Indigenous people and Indigenous women in particular a sense of identification. *Halfbreed* thus does not only structurally perform and draw on the self as relational; as Fagan et al. argue, the text also significantly contributed to the *creation* of new forms of relationality and connection among Indigenous people in Canada at the time (2009, 267).

When compared to this by now canonical earlier text, Harjo's memoir appears much less overtly political and also much less overtly communal. However, while only marginally concerned with Indigenous activism, the text nevertheless addresses the effects of history and crucial questions of cultural sovereignty; its politics lie in the ways in which genealogical and spiritual knowledge are integrated in its concept of human responsibility. Belinda Acosta has called *Crazy Brave* a "multifaceted creation story" (2014, 160), and this creation story is as much individual as it is communal, moving from the narrating self in ever-growing circles to eventually encompass humanity – a notion of interconnectedness that has long characterized Harjo's poetry and now finds a manifestation also as part of narrative self-constitution.

At the core of this agenda of responsibility is then indeed poetry as well as music, or, more generally, art. The memoir begins with the autobiographical narrator as a toddler who discovers her fascination with music: "My rite of passage into the world of humanity occurred then, through jazz. The music was a startling bridge between familiar and strange lands" (Harjo 2012, 18). As a "rite of passage into the world of humanity," the relationship to music is thus from the beginning presented as more than an affinity to a particular art form; music and poetry are presented as a link between different worlds, and they position the individual in a web of connections, including genealogical and mythological ones. The affinity to poetry and music and the artistic talent, therefore, are not strictly individual but they link the individual to larger contexts of meaning.

As such, they come with obligations. Remembering is crucial and a matter of survival – individually and collectively, physically, mentally, and spiritually. Poetry is a form of re-telling, re-membering, re-appropriating one's life, genealogy, heritage in face of severe individual and collective loss. As such, the poet is charged with responsibilities towards herself as well as towards others. Early on in the narrative, the autobiographical narrator declares:

> I was entrusted with carrying voices, songs, and stories to grow and to release into the world, to be of assistance and inspiration. These were my responsibility. I'm not special. It is this way for everyone. We enter into a family story, and then other stories based on tribal clans, on tribal towns

> and nations, lands, countries, planetary systems and universes. Yet we each have our own individual soul story to tend. (2012, 20)

Harjo presents an understanding of the individual as implicated and embedded in various communal stories and with obligations towards them; at the same time, the individual is not reduced to or determined by these contexts. Yet, the larger contexts referenced here provide frameworks of genealogy and language in which the individual story can be told and read. In the end, the narrator emphasizes the already cited close connection between her life and ancestral language (164); in light of the intertwinement of poetry and obligation, she explicitly accepts what she sees as entrusted in her.

The sense of obligation that comes with a gift links poetry to the very act of autobiographical remembering. Autobiographical narration becomes more than individual reminiscence – like poetry it has a communal function. Harjo's text is not an autoethnographic text; even though it references the histories of the Mvskoke people, it does not focus on community history. However, it does insist on the individual's responsibility vis-à-vis communal contexts, and this responsibility is manifest both in poetry and in autobiographical narration. When early on in the memoir the narrator states: "My generation is now the door to memory. This is why I am remembering" (2012, 21), this declaration does more than express the individual motivation for the telling of a life-story; it places the text in the larger context of testimony and highlights the obligations of a generation between dispossession and narrative agency: "As I write this," continues Harjo, "I hear the din of voices of so many people, and so many stories that want to come forth. Each name is a tributary to many others, to many places. […] These people, our ancestors, want to be recognized; they want to be remembered" (2012, 21). What is to be remembered is the history of dispossession as well as resistance and continuance; but also to be remembered is the history of the Mvskoke nation as shaped by cultural encounters and hybridity. Individual remembering is fed by collective memory; collective memory in turn is transported in poetry. Poetry, the artist's responsibility, and autobiographical knowledge are inseparable in Harjo's memoir.

5. The Challenges of Autobiographical Knowledge in Indigenous Life Writing

The insistence on relationality and cultural self-positioning in both examples raises the question of the challenges texts such as these present to different frameworks of reception as well as to the study of life writing. National narratives lay a particular claim to individual life stories. In the Canadian context, life writing tends to be read as "preeminent among the genres in which the evolving character and concerns of the nation have been and continue to be written" (Egan/Helms 2004, 216). In the case of residential school survivors' stories, as Julie McGonegal has argued, the *Royal Commission of Aboriginal Peoples* report of 1996 "reproduce[s] and

analyze[s] the testimonies of survivors as part of a larger national project of bringing the 'secret', as it were, of settler colonial violence out into the open, with the ostensible aim of promoting Aboriginal healing and promoting reconciliation" (2009, 69). While making colonial violations a national concern is clearly necessary and was long overdue when the report was presented, the incorporation of the survivors' narratives into a narrative of national betterment is problematic when it fails to question the ineluctability of the nation state. Indigenous life writing, even if it adheres to the narrative conventions that suggest an individual's struggles with national frameworks, or that address a national audience (such as Campbell's and other texts, survivors' narratives, other testimonies), more often than not effectively calls into question the status the nation-state holds in the narration of the Indigenous self and of community – and it certainly rejects its appropriation by the narrative of the (Canadian or US American) nation, often countering the attempt with the insistence on tribal nationalism. Hence, instead of simply being appropriable into the narrative fabric of the multicultural and 'polyphonic' nation state, Indigenous life writing presents a complex maneuvering of subject positions in relation to a broad range of narrative conventions on the formal level, and a negotiation of individual desires, of identifications with a diversity of communities, and of gendered and cultural self-positions and community expectations.

Reading Indigenous women's first-person narratives as "political acts in themselves" (2009, 54), Dian Million argues that they necessarily have an effect upon (white) scholarship. In and through these narratives, Indigenous women do not only create individual narratives of suffering, survival, and definition of self, they also, Million suggests, participate

> in creating a new language for communities to address the real multi-layered facets of their histories and concerns by insisting on the inclusion of our lived experience, rich with emotional knowledges, what pain and grief and hope meant or mean now in our pasts and futures. (2009, 54)

The "felt experiences as community knowledges," she claims, crucially inform Indigenous scholars' positions (2009, 54). In light of an agenda of decolonizing the academy, this indeed has an effect upon scholarship, for it further complicates the relation between individual experience and its narrativization – so characteristic for the genre of autobiography – by implying a necessary re-evaluation of individual experience as a basis and form of community knowledge. While the study of life writing has long acknowledged the simultaneously singular and representative character of the subject of autobiography, the focus here is not on representation but on integrating individual experience and its narrativization into a community framework. The effect, clearly, is political, for individual narratives become an integral part of struggles for sovereignty. In this context, current notions of autobiography as self-construction rather than self-expression may be seen as undermining

the notion of testimony and authentic experience so crucial to the political and cultural function of Indigenous self-narratives, which could be seen as presenting yet another form of discursive colonization. However, looking at Campbell's and Harjo's memoirs as examples, I would like to suggest that we can identify a potential common ground on which these more recent shifts in autobiographical scholarship and Indigenous self-narratives – with all their personal and communal implications – stand. I suggest an understanding of stories and storytelling as constitutive for the notion of self as related, placed and embodied, and as constituted by cultural practices; hence, insisting on self-narration as a narrative construction allows to read these narratives as strategic condensation of experience rather than their mere expression, a condensation shaped by cultural conventions and community knowledge. Jennifer Henderson and Pauline Wakeham have highlighted

> the vital importance and inseparability of the question of culture from both Indigenous injuries and reparations. Culture, broadly construed, cannot be held discrete from political and legal discourse; rather, it is the means through which redress and reconciliation operate as polyvalent symbolic forms which shape and mediate past and present realities through processes of signification. (Henderson and Wakeham 2009, 15)

This clearly applies to life writing and literature as well, for as both Campbell's and Harjo's texts make clear, there is a close relationship between Indigenous social realities, life stories, life writing, and literature. In "The Disempowerment of First North American Native Peoples and Empowerment Through Their Writing," Jeannette Armstrong links life stories and literature (1993, 209). Literature is one form through which life realities and life stories become manifest and understandable, and indeed, autobiographical writers link literature, life and story very intimately.

Thus, pointing to the link between life writing and other forms of writing does not suggest that there is an uncomplicated relationship between life and the writing of lives as mimetic and direct expression in both fiction and autobiography, but rather that there is a conceptual overlap between or rather an embeddedness of life writing in other kinds of stories, written or oral. And further that there is a specific assumption about life writing as not only an individual's story but also as a story with a social and communal (and oftentimes overtly political) function. In the context of Indigenous life stories in particular, these close connections between different individual and collective forms of storytelling highlight the ways in which autobiographical narratives convey not only Indigenous life knowledge – knowledge about how a life is and can be led – but also Indigenous auto-bio-graphical knowledge – knowledge about how a life can be told. Maybe, to come back to Harjo's initial claim, it indeed is "the kind of knowledge that could free" us, that might provide an angle for decolonizing academic work.

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Les comptes rendus de lecture sont attribués par Dr. Doris Eibl, responsable de ce domaine de publication. Merci de vous adresser à elle pour vos propositions de compte rendu (Doris.G.Eibl@uibk.ac.at).

Acknowledgements

This collection of articles presents a selection of papers given at the 35th annual conference of the Association for Canadian Studies in German-speaking countries (GKS) in Grainau, Germany, in February 2014, which was thematically organized by the section "Indigenous and Cultural Studies", then headed by the author. I wish to thank my fellow members of this section for assisting in the development of this idea and the GKS for backing this innovative conference theme. As well, I would like to thank all participants of the conference for making it such a seminal event and, moreover, the contributors to this edition for their scholarly work and for sharing their knowledges. In this respect, my sincere gratitude goes to the peer-reviewer for his very constructive feedback. Likewise, I extend my gratitude to the general editors of the ZKS, specifically Katja Sarkowsky, for their staunch support of this special edition. My special thanks go to Nina Reuther for her editorial work on the French articles and her translation of the French abstracts. I wish to thank the copy editor of ZKS at Wißner Publications, Michael Friedrichs, for his final honing of the manuscript as much as my research assistant Janelle Rodriques and language assistant Tanja Stehn for editorial and copy editorial work. All of you have contributed to this final product, and I wish to say:

Danke!
Thank you!
Merci!
Miigwetch!
λeeko λeeko!
Limlamt!

Kerstin Knopf