LUND UNIVERSITY

A Landscape of Left-Overs : Changing Conceptions of Place and Environment among Mi'kmaq Indians of Eastern Canada

Hornborg, Anne-Christine

2001

Link to publication

Citation for published version (APA):
Hornborg, A.-C. (2001). *A Landscape of Left-Overs : Changing Conceptions of Place and Environment among Mi'kmaq Indians of Eastern Canada*. [Doctoral Thesis (monograph), History of Religions and Religious Behavioural Science]. Almqvist & Wiksell International.

Total number of authors:
1

General rights
Unless other specific re-use rights are stated the following general rights apply:
Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.
• Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
• You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
• You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal

Read more about Creative commons licenses: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/

Take down policy
If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

LUND UNIVERSITY

PO Box 117
221 00 Lund
+46 46-222 00 00

Download date: 20. Dec. 2025

Anne-Christine Hornborg

A LANDSCAPE OF LEFT-OVERS

Anne-Christine Hornborg

A Landscape of Left-Overs

Changing Conceptions of Place and Environment among Mi'kmaq Indians of Eastern Canada

LUND STUDIES
IN HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

General editor
Tord Olsson

VOLUME 14

Religionshistoriska avdelningen, Lunds universitet
Lund

Distributed by:
Almqvist & Wiksell International
P.O. Box 7634
SE-103 94 STOCKHOLM
SWEDEN
Phone: +46 8 613 61 00
Fax: +46 8 24 25 43
E-mail: order@city.akademibokhandeln.se

©Anne-Christine Hornborg 2001
Printed by KFS, Lund

"Near Cape d'Or he [Kluskap] fed his dogs with the lights of the moose; large portions of this food were turned into rocks, and remain there to this day; the place is called Oopunk." (Rand 1894/1971: 293)

"At Caraquet, you can see in the rock the bones and head of a fish that Gluskap ate." (Wallis & Wallis 1955: 330)

Grandmother, Kelly's Mountain, Cape Breton.

"I give you something that you can grasp … I come to visit you at your home in Sweden. You let me in your house, … you feed me and you treat me good … In two weeks I isolate you in your bedroom and say no, you can't come in[to the rest of the house], unless you ask me to come out of your bedroom, and if you want meals I'll cook them for you … And eventually you just become prisoners in your home and that's what happened to us. We are locked in our bedrooms. The reserves are our bedrooms and our house is Canada." (Vaughen Doucette, Mi'kmaq traditionalist, on the Ekasoni reserve, Sept. 2000)

PREFACE

This book could never have been written without all the Mi'kmaq friends who kindly and generously during the years have invited me into their homes and lives. I am in the deepest debt to Sulian Stone Eagle Herney, Ishbel Munroe, Charles and Belinda Bernard and Vaughen Doucette, persons with whom I share, at this moment of writing, a 10-year-old friendship. Their spirit and friendship have taught me a lot, both about being Mi'kmaq and being human. And to all the other Mi'kmaq I have met or shared a cup of tea with: Thank you.

I am deeply indebted to Tord Olsson, my supervisor and professor at the Department of History of Religions at Lund University. He has guided and inspired my work in our meetings and at the seminars. There are also colleagues in the Department of History of Religions who I wish to thank. Olle Qvarnström always generously gives his time to discussions. Catharina Raudvere, Bodil Liljefors-Persson and Karin Sjögren have always been supporting and helpful. I also give a special thank you to Sten Barnekow, Heike Peters and Pierre Wiktorin for our important "after seminar talks" at "Valvet". Other seminar participants that have shared and commented on my work at the seminars are Stefan Arvidsson, Sidsel Hansen, Thomas Larsson, Jürgen Offermanns, Jonas Otterbeck, Åse Piltz, Mikael Salomonsson, Jonas Svensson, Kristina Taylor and Anna Törngren – just to mention a few of them. Jonas Svensson has also provided me with invaluable, technical assistance in the editorial process. I also thank Walter Übelacker for his always open door and support, and Ylva Vramming who was very helpful when I, as an undergraduate student, tried hard to combine my studies with work.

Colleagues at other departments in Lund that I would like to thank warmly are Professor Kajsa Ekholm-Friedman and Professor Jonathan Friedman at the Department of Social Anthropology. During our 25-year-old friendship there has always been time for inspiring meetings. I especially thank Kajsa, who read and commented on my manuscript. Her remarks were of great importance as was her support during my years as a PhD candidate. Anthropologists Mikael Kurkiala at Uppsala University and Christer Lindberg at Lund University are two colleagues in Native Studies who I send my thanks to. It has always been inspiring to talk with Mikael, who did his fieldwork among the Lakota Sioux when I was in "Mi'kmaqland". Christer Lindberg is one of the persons who has worked with SAMS – Swedish Americanist

Society (Svenska Amerikanistsällskapet) to create a forum in Lund to discuss Native issues. There are also several doctoral students and teachers at the human ecology division in Lund that I have shared my discussions with. My studies at the Department of Comparative Literature in Lund gave me valuable insights in text analysis. For his inspiring ideas and guidance into modern literary theory, I am indebted to Per-Eric Ljung.

Turning to international colleagues there are some that have been extra helpful. Firstly there are scholars in Mi'kmaq culture and history: Ruth Holmes Whitehead, Harold McGee and Harald Prins. Other helpful scholars, who also have become close friends, are Ruth and Aron Schneider, and Brian and Sandra Tennysson at the University of Cape Breton. I give Sandra extra credit for her friendship and hospitality during my stay in Canada. I also thank Michael Jackson, who read part of my thesis and with his comments put more joy into my work.

For improving my English in different parts of the thesis I want to thank my husband Alf Hornborg (Parts I-III), Lindy Gustavsson (Part IV) and Neil Tomkinson (Part V). My friend Inga Larsson has also been a good sparring partner for me when I have needed to test my ideas and she has always given useful comments on my work.

Doing fieldwork and meeting international colleagues in Native Studies to discuss current issues have been an absolute condition for this work to be done. I am in great debt to Uno Otterstedts Fund, the Rydelius Fund and the Crafoord Foundation for their generous contributions to my field studies and conferences.

Finally there are persons that I am in deep personal debt to. First I want to mention my mother, who passed away the same year I received my grants for finishing my thesis. She taught me the most important thing of all, first of all we are humans, a quality good to remember in an academic world where there is a risk that humans tend to be reduced to their manuscripts. At last, but not least important is my family; Alf, Sara and Christoffer. It has been a long road to travel, but I have been in good company. To my son Christoffer I give extra thanks for his assistance in computer matters.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION 13
The Mi'kmaq and their first encounters with Europeans 18

Sources 21
Voices from the past 21
Studies in history and ethnography 25
A history of their own 28

History 28
Diseases 29
Trade and the Mission 30
Fighting for the land 32
Settlers and the life on the reserves 34
A modern history 37

II. LOCAL LIFEWORLDS AND ABSTRACT CONSTRUCTIONS: ON THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL FOUNDATION OF INDIAN ROMANTICISM 41

Nature and culture as separate entities or as a unit 41
Models and human-environmental relations 49
Two monolithic models? 50

An anthropocentric or a biocentric worldview 53
Animals as persons 56
Hunting – a "holy occupation" 62
Premodern Mi'kmaq – biocentrics or capitalists? 65
Modern lifeworlds and biocentric ideals 73

The Indian and the place 75
A Romantic prehistory 75
The Indian – the first deep ecologist? 78
To read a landscape: The Garden of Eden or the Devil's Wilderness 82
The promised land or the lost land? 88

Local lifeworlds and abstract constructions 91
The phenomenology of place 93
A local and a global identity 98
Contexts 100

Epilogue: “Indians”, premodern hunters and modern reserve inhabitants 104
III. “TILL THEY SAW HIM NO MORE” (1850-1930) 107
Trickster and culture hero 107
To turn the perspective − can silent voices speak*?* 109
Text: fiction, facts or “faction” 110
Silas Rand: Giving instructions on the True Faith 114
Leland: Collecting “the poetry of the Volk*”* 117
Myth, legend, or ahtookwokun 122
The Grand Narrative: Documenting the “tradition” 125
Deconstructing predecessors 129
Stories for the Public 131
Different layers in and readings of early Kluskap stories 133
The little stories and their embeddedness in the local lifeworld 134
Megâmaage – *Home of the Mi’kmaq* 134
Transforming the landscape through a beaver hunt 141
Grandmother 146
Kluskap on Cape Breton 147
The little stories and their encompassment of the global world 152
French cranberries – changes in ecology 155
Bill Dumfy’s story – changes in the social and economic structure 157
Changes in ideology – the missionary as “the Other” 163
Kluskap – “Owner of the animals”, manitou*, or the Savior?* 166
Kluskap – A Mi’kmaq? 174
Kluskap and Christ 177
The dream of utopia 181
The departure of Kluskap 184
“till they saw him no more” 186
Epilogue 193
IV. INTERLUDE (1930-1970) 195
Kluskap in dormancy 195
Whitewash 198
An ambiguous story 208
To view the invisible 212
AIM – to be an Indian 214
The “Indian” becomes a Mi’kmaq 215

To glimpse the shadow of Kluskap 219
Kluskap arrives Eskasoni by car 221

Epilogue 223

V. THE RETURN OF KLUSKAP 225
This is Mi'kmaq land 225

A model of manifold dimensions 226
The image 227
Modern lifeworlds 229
A Mi'kmaq position against images 235
The "Lone Ethnographer's labors"? 237

The lived world and the images 240
A Green prelude 242
"An ordinary, worried, human being" 243

The modern warrior 247
A battle with headband and drums 247
Fighting in military uniforms 248

Tradition as a weapon 250
The granite quarry 250
Confrontation 251

To be a Mi'kmaq: ascribed images and the power to control them 255
In the shadow of Mother Earth 260
"Traditional ecological knowledge" 262
Sacred ecology 265
Defender of Mother Earth 270
Kelly's or Kluskap's Mountain? 275
A sacred place 278
Kluskap: a beaver hunter, a fairy-tale figure, or Mother Earth's defender? Texts and counter-texts 284
The right to speak 289
Construction and authenticity 292
Culture-building is meaning-building 296
Paqtatek 300

Epilogue 302

VI. CONCLUDING REMARKS……..…. 305

The notions of "one with nature", "holy occupation", and "deep relations" to the land 306
Kluskap and the changing lifeworlds 308
New roads to follow 310
The "Lone Ethnographer's labors" revisited 311
MAPS 313
REFERENCES 315

I. INTRODUCTION

In the autumn of 1992 my family and I left our farm and our home in the Swedish East Coast archipelago and went abroad. As teenagers my husband and I had spent our holidays on the farm that later on became our home for 15 years. The dream was to build up an alternative way of living, far away from the academic buzz. Inspired by the green movement we had left the university, each of us with a B.A., and built up a sheep stock with 180 ewes, which in the springtime increased threefold, when 200-300 little lambs were born.

In spite of all the good life in the countryside there was also hard work. Apart from all the farm work, we had to work in the city, and when my husband received research grants to study environmental discourses in Nova Scotia, we chose to sell the sheep and leave the farm. Existentially it was a hard choice, and it might surely have made our (and our children's) hearts fall apart when the sea, meadows and oaks disappeared out of sight, if we had not known that the place would still be there for us, whenever we decided to return home.

Breaking up from Sweden and the stay in Canada often made me wonder about place and meaning for humans. Reflections on identity and place thus intensified when I had physically distanced myself from my "home". They became, furthermore, a recurrent topic when I came into contact with Mi'kmaq Indians in the province, a group of people who had lost their land and lived on small reserves, not fenced off but still clearly separated from the main society. The Mi'kmaq fought battles against the authorities in many cases, political, cultural, economic, social, and most of all about the right to their land. During our stay in the early 1990s much of the conflict concerned a mountain, Kelly's (or Kluskap's) Mountain, which was threatened by the proposed establishment of a superquarry. The Mi'kmaq claimed that the mountain according to treaties belonged to them, that it was an important part of their tradition and that it was a sacred place. Kluskap was their traditional god, and the mountain and a cave in it was his dwelling-place and the place of his future return.

Both my academic and personal interest in the Mi'kmaq struggle for the mountain increased. As an academic I had my exams in the history of religions, social anthropology and literature. My personal engagement was in environmental movements and solidarity movements for the Third World. I often visited the reserves or had Mi'kmaq friends in our home. My husband

and I took part in important political meetings concerning the Mi'kmaq's battle over the mountain or in other environmental issues that affected them. After nearly a year we returned to Sweden with piles of material, mostly about the mountain, because this fight was at its most intense during our stay on Cape Breton, the island where the mountain is situated.

The return to the farm was fantastic. It was waiting for us beautifully dressed in early summer green. I also felt privileged to have the right to a place, after having met people who had lost theirs. In summer 1994 we could repay some of the hospitality we had met on the reserves by inviting Mi'kmaq spokesmen to our farm in Sweden. The main reason for their visit was to join a conference in Arvidsjaur about indigenous peoples' right to their land. It was a strange experience to watch Sulian Stone Eagle Herney, one of the traditionalist leaders and spokesman for the Sacred Mountain Society, drumming and chanting at our farm when the sun was setting. The little spot on my map, which to me had seemed extremely local, suddenly became a globalized arena, and my thoughts went to the former owners of the farm, by now gone many years ago. How distant it would have been for them to imagine that in the next generation there would be an "Indian"[1] drumming at "Kalvkullen" ("Calf Hill"), an "Indian" who was not even wearing traditional clothes, but camouflage dress. Not only were two worlds joined; the "pure product" had also "gone crazy".[2]

My thesis is an attempt to describe the Mi'kmaq relation to their land and their way of being-in-the-world, both contemporary and historical, and how they have formulated this in their tradition. The relation is a complex matter to analyze and many levels have to be sorted out. The historical texts, written by colonizers and missionaries were biased by their particular purposes, and their models and images must be analyzed in order to separate them from the Mi'kmaq's own lifeworld and cosmology. The Mi'kmaq lifeworld must also be anchored in time in order not to walk into the trap of describing a Mi'kmaq world as ahistorical. Their worldview has thoroughly been influenced by the social conditions and historical changes that have framed their being-in-the-world.

After a short presentation of literature on the Mi'kmaq, relevant for my work, and a brief introduction to Mi'kmaq history, one of the main chapters

[1] I mark Indian in this context, to show that it is a constructed concept. How it is constructed I will later return to.

[2] See Clifford 1988: 1-17.

follows. In this I examine the relation between local lifeworlds and abstract constructions and models fabricated by outsiders. When different groups of people meet, the unfamiliar is analyzed, explained and integrated into one's own frames of reference. In the historical meeting between "the West" and cultures in North America different worldviews clashed. Few peoples have been so surrounded by images as the "Indians". In the West the "Indian" was often given a Janus face, as savage or wise, as someone who needs the West or as someone the West needs. In both cases we are dealing with an image created from a Western point of view, and thus it says more about the one who is constructing the image than the one who is constructed. The first model describes the "Indian" as an imperfect being, who needs colonization to become fully human. The other model describes the "Indian" in positive terms, is generated by the colonizer's (or society's) needs and shortcomings, and becomes a kind of critique of civilization. It is the latter model I mainly examine, because it played an important role when Mi'kmaq and other Natives involved themselves in modern environmental issues. From Romantic texts about the Indian as tightly woven into his place and nature, to contemporary images of the Indian as having a biocentic worldview, a critique toward Western society is built in. I shall examine these constructions to see if they should be seen only as images, or if there is a foundation in local lifeworlds that might have generated these images. It may be that written texts about the "Indian" by Romanticists and scholars are constructed, but in parallel with these models the targets of these descriptions have lived their real lives. To interpret and depict "the Indian" as having a biocentric worldview is first a matter of interest when this worldview is contextualized in time and space. Phenomenology might be a way to understand both the preconditions for how the scholars and Romanticists themselves interpreted and formulated models, how they applied these models to a different way of being-in-the-world, and how the targets of interpretation experienced their lifeworld themselves. It is not only that the way of being-in-the-world creates specific worldviews, it also affects how people act.

In chapter II, I will further discuss the construction of the "Indian" in more general terms, different ways of viewing nature, a human's relation to place, and ethics; my aim is to contextualize these issues with historical and modern Mi'kmaq material in later chapters. Since the traditional Mi'kmaq bands mainly lived by hunting, I will focus on hunting cultures and the ontology premodern hunters encompassed, but also how this ontology was reinterpreted and geared to a Cartesian, dual thinking by Romanticists and later on by early

scholars, where the dichotomy nature-culture played an important role. In the Romanticists' attempts to embrace and interpret a hunter being-in-the-world by using Western models we might have one explanation to the idea that the "Indian" would have been one with nature. From the very outset, such identification, however, is not possible, since the hunter did not possess a Western dichotomy of nature and culture. To feel oneself as one with nature first demands a concept of nature, as separated from the subject, otherwise there is nothing to be identified with.

A meeting between the "Indian" and scholar could be furthered by different approaches. For the scholar one way is to study historical texts, and, based on them, formulate theories about the other culture. The other way is to do fieldwork. When being-in-the-field the scholar not only reads about an "Indian" feeling for place, but might also learn more intimately about it by getting closer to it, and by being on the "homeground" of the one he or she wants to get to know. Beside cultural differences, I shall discuss here the relation humans have with the place they inhabit. The relation could be described as a subjective or personal relation, and it is not specifically Indian. Even scholars have their specific relations to places. A place that feels like home, both for a premodern hunter and a modern Mi'kmaq, for the visitors, who with their "outsider" perspective can not read the meaningful signs, might be interpreted as a general love towards nature when this love actually is for a *specific* place. Where the visitor sees plain nature, the dweller sees a home. For North American Native groups the struggle over land, and the birth of the reserves, have been important events with a decisive impact on how they formulated their relation to their place, and in the long run, how they were going to talk about nature.

Due to their being-in-the-world, the modern reserve citizen's and the premodern hunter's worldviews are radically different, and should both worldviews be labeled as biocentric the concept becomes empty or irrelevant. Statements about biocentric Indians should clearly tell who the particular Indian is. There is always the risk that if the premodern hunter should be the model for how the concept of biocentrism is interpreted, the modern reserve citizen might be accused of not living a "true Indian" life and ultimately for lacking authenticity. If, however, the concept is contextualized, there are new possibilities to discuss it, on the basis of the conditions of different lifeworlds. Therefore, I have chosen to closely study two periods in the history of the Mi'kmaq, one from the middle of the 19th century until 1930, and the other from the period 1990-1994. To make a close study of these periods has its

explanation. During the modern environmental struggle, when the Mi'kmaq are opposing a superquarry, Kluskap is in focus − a character who for the first time is mentioned in literature in the 1850s and who was a main person in many oral traditions of that time. After 1930 Mi'kmaq reserves were beginning to get modernized, which influenced the stories about Kluskap and the Mi'kmaq relation to the main society. Since the Mi'kmaq referred to their traditions and to Kluskap, both in their past and in their modern struggle in the 1990s, a comparison between these two periods is important. How was Kluskap contextulized in the hunter's cosmology and how is he talked about in modern times? He will be a key *persona* in my thesis in order to discuss larger issues such as tradition, changing conceptions of land, and human-environmental relations.

I begin with the historical materials. In this case our main way of getting information is through the texts of the colonizers and missionaries. In chapter III, I discuss how the texts about Mi'kmaq have been constructed, the authors' ambitions and the influences from this time, but I shall also consider if there is a way to grasp a premodern Mi'kmaq worldview. The 19th century is a very important period in Mi'kmaq history, which is mirrored in the stories. At that time the Mi'kmaq lost their land and were forced to settle on reserves. I think it is important to lay bare the two worlds that inhabit the stories, the life as a hunter and the life as a reserve inhabitant. The chapter is thus an attempt to explore a premodern Mi'kmaq hunter's way of interpreting his world, but also how he explained the "new" things which came with colonization, and ultimately led to the reserves. Kluskap is a key character in the stories, when it comes to explaining both the world and the encounters with the colonizers. Through his adventuresome encounters with animals, humans, and other beings we can glimpse the earthy, organic frames of reference of the Mi'kmaq hunter: his everyday familiarity, beyond linguistic communication, with the tangible experience of animal sounds, odours, viscera, and bones.

In chapter IV, I describe how many Kluskap stories faded away when reserve life became the predominant way of living, and the government better could control the Mi'kmaq by forcing them to settle down. Compulsory schooling and modernization were powerful in transforming the Mi'kmaq into modern Canadians, but the closed world on the reserves was simultaneously of great importance in maintaining a Mi'kmaq identity. The growing interest in other Native groups in the 1960s led to a strong revitalization of their own traditions in the 1970s. Different movements within the main society expressed a growing dissatisfaction with what the modern project had given

humanity, and a hope was born that "Indians" would have something important to contribute in order to save the world. This idea would later be expressed by modern Mi'kmaq traditionalists.

In chapter V the emphasis is on the events that surrounded the battle over Kelly's Mountain, a place in oral traditions connected with Kluskap. Based on modern material I collected during my stay in the province in 1992-1993 and 1996, I examine how the Mi'kmaq formulate their protests as modern reserve citizens and in what way these protests differ from the stories at the turn of the century. Which role did the images of the "Indian" play and how did they influence the expectations of how spokesmen for the group should act? How do modern Mi'kmaq articulate their views of tradition, spirituality and nature into a "sacred ecology" and how does it differ from a premodern hunter's cosmology? How do modern Mi'kmaq relate to the Kluskap texts, written by White authors? The aim of the chapter is to put Mi'kmaq environmental engagement and tradition into a modern context, to see how the awareness of the Mi'kmaq about their position in environmental contexts works, and how they phrased their counter language against the power and economical interest of mainstream society.

The Mi'kmaq and their first encounters with Europeans

The majority of modern Mi'kmaq are settled on 25 reserves along the coast of Eastern Canada ("the Maritimes"): New Brunswick (9), Nova Scotia (13) and Prince Edward Island (3).[3] Archaeological discoveries show that this people have lived in the province for at least three thousand years.[4] Findings in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, bear witness to hunting settlements from about 8500 BC. The Mi'kmaq say that these settlements have belonged to their ancestors.[5] There are also Mi'kmaq reserves on the Gaspé Peninsula in Quebec (3), on Newfoundland (1) and in Northern Maine, USA (1). Together with their neighboring tribes, the Maliseet, Passamaquoddy, Penobscot and St. Francis Abenaki, they historically formed a greater confederation of Eastern Algonkins, called the Wabanaki Indians.

The Mi'kmaq belong to the Algonkin-speaking family and are, with its 25,000 people, the largest Algonkin-speaking group in Eastern Canada.[6] According to tradition the Mi'kmaq called themselves *ulnoo*, which was their

[3] Davis 1992: 59.
[4] Leavitt 1985/1993: 4.
[5] *Micmac Maliseet Nations News* (from now written as *MMNN*), 1994, no. 9, p. 9.
[6] Prins 1996: 1.

word for people, human beings.[7] An early name of the group among the French was *souriquois* and among the English *tarrentines*.[8] The missionary Le Clercq named them *gaspesians*[9] and the missionary Maillard used the name *mickmakis*.[10] Micmac is the English phonemic transcription of *ni'kmaq*, which means "my relatives".[11] *Ni'kmaq* was a greeting word that during the early 17th century came to be associated with the tribe.[12] The more phonetically correct spelling gained ground in the 1980s, partly because the Nova Scotia Museum introduced the new spelling, partly because it was used in a popular television series about the group. Today, the designation Mi'kmaq has become standard.

Texts about Mi'kmaq ancient history speak of a "pre-contact" period and refer to the time prior to the 17th century, before systematic contacts were established between the Mi'kmaq and the English and French. Even Portuguese fishermen are thought to have had a settlement on Cape Breton in 1521, and Mi'kmaq place names show up on Portuguese maps from 1550.[13] Letters, published manuscripts and logbooks from this time also describe meetings with indigenous groups.[14] Archaeologists have found evidence of even earlier European visits: Viking settlements on Newfoundland. The earliest of these transatlantic journeys is believed to have taken place during the late 10th century. The cross-Atlantic journeys probably continued until the 14th century.[15] During this long period of time it is possible that Mi'kmaq and Vikings could have met. The mentioned "skraelings" in the Icelandic Sagas could have been

---

[7] Rand 1888/1994: 143, Whitehead (1988: 1) spells it *l'nuk*.

[8] Leavitt 1985/1993: 13.

[9] Le Clercq 1691/1968. Le Clercq named them after Gaspé (Peninsula) where his mission was.

[10] Maillard 1758.

[11] First written reference to the word Micmac is from 1676 in Charles Aubert de la Chesnay's memoirs (Native Council of Nova Scotia 1997: 7).

[12] Davis 1992: 23, Nova Scotia Museum 1997: http://www.ednet.ns.ca./educ/museum/mikmaq/mikmaqsp.htm. In my thesis I will use the phonetically most authentic spelling (Mi'kmaq), except in cases when the word is a part of a quotation from a source that uses the English spelling Micmac. The spelling of the word is not without meaning. First of all it is the spelling that is recommended by the Mi'kmaq themselves. For some Mi'kmaq the English spelling is a further example of the European annexation of Mi'kmaq land and culture. To get their own spelling legalized is an important step for modern Mi'kmaq in rebuilding their culture.

[13] Whitehead 1991: 7.

[14] Biggar 1911.

[15] Gonzales 1981: 8.

Algonkins.[16] We know very little about Mi'kmaq contacts and culture exchanges with their neighboring tribes, e.g. the Iroquois, since they did not leave any written sources.

Although documentation is scant, the history of the New World does not begin "with the arrival of the Europeans with their alphabet, their pens and their parchment".[17] Mi'kmaq had their history woven into oral tradition, where places, memories and people were put together into a meaningful universe. It is very tempting to experience the period before the first European contacts as a timeless condition, when all traditions were original and not influenced by other cultures. Neal Salisbury is one scholar who has criticized the view of the "aboriginal Indian" whose history starts with colonization. He wants to take away the prejudice that Native history qualitatively should differ from European history.[18] Instead this history belongs to a culture that like others has its own history: "By the same token it means laying aside the assumption that linguistic, cultural, and political boundaries served to isolate Native Americans from one another until Europeans came along and obliged them to interact."[19]

The first documented meetings with the Mi'kmaq occurred in the 16th century. The coastal provinces seem to have been a very heavily trafficked district where men, women and goods were moved between the St. Lawrence River, the Labrador coast, Newfoundland, the Great Lakes, the Ohio River Valley and Southern New England.[20] An early meeting is told of by Cartier 1534, who by the north shore of Bay of Chaleurs saw "savages" in boats that were moving between the shores. When the Mi'kmaq discovered him and his crew they probably wanted to exchange goods, but Cartier's men were frightened by their persistency and fired some shots that drove them away.[21] That they were Mi'kmaq is suggested by a phrase they uttered in the meeting:

---

[16] Bailey 1937: 4, cf. Nabokov 1978: 18p. T. Oleson traces how Thorfinnr Karlsefni followed the northern shoreline of Eastern Canada, sailed through the Strait of Canso and later to Eastern New England (McGee 1974: 32). The Swedish archaeologist Mats Larsson (1999) wants to place Vinland in Nova Scotia.

[17] Whitehead 1991: 1.

[18] Calvin Martin (1999: 26p.) is another scholar who has criticized the image of the Indians as a people without history: "This is precisely what was going on throughout North America when Europeans like Verrazano arrived with the intention of inserting the aborigines into a divinely ordered, privileged history." Cf. Wolf 1982, Gill 1982: 36, Jeanen 1987: 65, Miller 1989: 55 and Prins 1996: 4.

[19] Salisbury 1987: 47.

[20] Leavitt 1985/1993: 7.

[21] Whitehead 1991: 11.

"*Napeu ton damen assur tah"*, which could be traced to *napéw*, the Mi'kmaq word for man, and *tú dameu acertar*, Portuguese trade-pidgin.

Sources

The first systematic documentations of the Mi'kmaq were written in the 17th century. Contacts between the New and Old World had then been going on for a century. Colin Smith has, in *The Acadian Classics: Seventeenth Century Views of the Micmac Indian* (1977), studied the "classics" sources on life in New France during the 17th century. He finds that the early chroniclers clearly were influenced by European literary tradition, in spite of their ambitions and attempts to give objective reports from the new colony. The author's background and aims with his travels also put a personal mark on the document.

Voices from the past

First among the classics is Marc Lescarbot, a lawyer from Paris. Through his profession he came into contact with Sieur de Poutrincourt. In 1604 this man had followed Sieur de Monts to Port Royal (today Annapolis) and during his travels Lescarbot had to take care of Sieur de Poutrincourt's business in France. After a disappointment in a court trial Lescarbot went with his master on his new trip over the Atlantic. He is explicit about his motives: to see New France with his own eyes and to flee from a corrupt land.[22] Lescarbot stayed in the province from May 1606 until the end of July 1607. He lived at the trade station Port Royal, and almost never left the settlement. Although Lescarbot was a product of his time and dreamt that the "savages" would be settled, till the land, and become Christians, he attributed positive qualities to them.[23] His idealization of Mi'kmaq, or *souriquois* as he names them, becomes a way to criticize French society. He nourished the thought of a union between the Mi'kmaq and French colonists, where both groups would learn from each other, and he definitely did not want to see New France become a replica of the old country with its social misery and injustices.[24] Although Lescarbot criticizes his motherland and gives some flattering depictions of Mi'kmaq life, he hoped Christianity would be the belief that would unite the two groups. The tensions in his homeland between Huguenots and Jesuits are

[22] Lescarbot 1609/1928: x.

[23] As an example he is not fond of the pejorative word savage: "So that if we commonly call them savages, the word is abusive and unmerited" (quoted from Smith 1977: 22).

[24] Smith 1977: 35.

partly visible in the text. The French King had promised the leaders of Port Royal, de Mont and Poutrincourt, both Huguenots, that their priests would take charge of the spiritual needs among the French colonizers. Instead, the salvation of the Mi'kmaq would be handled by Catholic priests.[25] Since Lescarbot was a Huguenot, he had an interest in showing that Port Royal managed very well without any Jesuits. One example is that the baptism of Chief Membertou by the Huguenot priest Fleché is depicted as a successful victory for Christianity and as proof that no Jesuits are needed in the province. Home again in France, in 1609, Lescarbot published *Historie de la Nouvelle France*, which became very popular travel literature and caused the printing of a series of new editions, something that was very unusual at this time. For a short time he even went to jail after his homecoming, most probably for his critical attacks on the Jesuits.[26]

Some years after Lescarbot, the Jesuit missionary Pierre Biard arrived at Port Royal together with his companion Ennemond Massé. Biard was more pessimistic than Lescarbot concerning the cultural potential among the indigenous people and did not think that France had anything to learn from the Mi'kmaq.[27] Biard complained a lot about the persistent customs and traditions among the Mi'kmaq, but since he was dependent on his financiers for his work he stressed in his letters how successful the mission was. Later on, he and Massé were drawn into a conflict with the leading Huguenots in the colony and they both had to leave Port Royal. During their journey to a new mission they were caught by the English and sent back to France. Biard's *Relation de la Nouvelle France* was published in 1616 and can be read in *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents* (1959), a collection of documents with invaluable notes from the 17th century. The collection has Ruben Gold Thwaites as editor and the main content is texts, written by Jesuits. From 1632-1673 as an example, the Jesuit Superior in Quebec yearly sent a "relation" to his superior in Paris.[28] But in the volume there are also valuable documents, written by non-Jesuits (e.g. letters from Lescarbot.)

Another valuable source is *Histoire naturelle des peuples, des animaux, des arbres & plantes de l'Amerique septentrionale & de ses divers climats.*[29]

---

[25] *Jesuit Relations* 1959, I: 5.
[26] Smith 1977: 37.
[27] Smith 1977: 45.
[28] *Jesuit Relations* 1959, I: 38.
[29] I have used a text from The Nova Scotia Museum, which is taken from the Champlain Society's edition (1908) of Denys' text.

This description of Mi'kmaq everyday life was written by Nicolas Denys in 1672 after his 40-year stay as a merchant in the province. He had failed at timber exports in Le Heve in the 1630s and then decided to invest money in the fishery in Miscou in 1645. Two years later, in 1647, he was captured by his rivals. He came to Quebec in 1650 and arrived at Port Royal in 1653. While he was trying to build up trade relations on Cape Breton his house in Saint Pierre burned down and he moved to Bathurst to write his memoirs. A very interesting chapter is devoted to the quick change in Mi'kmaq traditions. Denys was especially shocked at the spread of and improper practice regarding alcohol among the Mi'kmaq. Colin Smith says that Denys had his personal reasons for demanding that the authorities have a more strict control over the alcohol, since it would strengthen his position as a merchant to be able to trade his goods without any risks that his ships would be plundered by drunken Mi'kmaq.[30] Denys gives the impression that the changes in Mi'kmaq society took place very quickly, but other sources modify the picture. The European products had influenced life among the Mi'kmaq, he said, but they (except for the liquor) were an improvement for the new owners. He could not foresee, however, that the exchange in the future would mean a negative dependence for the Indians and that some animal species would nearly become extinct.

A further contribution to the 17th century collections comes from a Recollect missionary, Chrestien Le Clercq.[31] He worked from 1675 to 1683, mainly on the Gaspé Peninsula, and his stay is described in *Nouvelle relation de la Gaspesie.* He often put elegant speeches in the mouths of the Indians to stress that they were not savages, but was himself convinced that if they were going to become civilized, they had to abandon their old traditions.[32] Le Clercq was well prepared for the conditions in the colony and freely borrowed data from other authors if he wanted to stress his arguments or fill in omissions in his manuscript. He seems to have read Denys and it is also obvious how he picked data from Le Jeune's Relation from 1634, from which he without hesitation copied a chapter and made some changes so the text would better fit the Gaspesians.[33] Le Clercq also created a new way of writing, a kind of

---

[30] Smith 1977: 83.

[31] Recollect is subordinate to the Franciscan order.

[32] Smith 1977: 57. The Gaspesian's (Mi'kmaq's) unwillingness to shake hands and nod their heads as the Europeans did, Le Clercq sees as proof of an unorganized society.

[33] When Le Clercq is describing the religious leaders' "juggleries" among the Gaspesians, he takes some of the data from the text by Le Jeune (Le Clercq 1691/1968: 217, cf. *Jesuit Relations* 1959, VI: 195pp.).

pictorial writing which would make Christianity more easily transmittable to the Indians. He mentions that he had found a new way of quickly teaching the prayers to the Gaspesians. By letting an arbitrary sign represent a word the reading of Christian texts became much easier for the Mi'kmaq.[34] His original pictorial writing has unfortunately not been found.

The 18th century material mostly consists of protocols, government decisions, military documents and other similar papers about the Mi'kmaq. Sieur de Dièreville's *Relation du voyage du Port Royal de l´Acadie, ou de la Nouvelle France* is one exception, but has been depicted by historians as an unreliable source.[35] It was published in 1708 and the author was probably a surgeon who traveled to the province, partly to experience some adventure and partly to get some extra income in the new colony.[36] Another exception is *An account of the customs and manners of the Mickmakis and Maricheet savage nations, now dependent on the government of Cape Breton.* This systematic description of Mi'kmaq life is written by the Catholic Missionary Pierre Maillard, more known as Abbé Maillard or Mosi Meial, which is the Mi'kmaq way of saying Monsieur Maillard. He arrived in 1735 at Louisbourg on Cape Breton to continue the Catholic mission among the Mi'kmaq, very quickly learned their language, and thereby won their confidence.[37] One of his primary functions was to mediate in the conflict between the Mi'kmaq and the English who at this time had defeated the French and driven them away from the province. Maillard spent 27 years among the Mi'kmaq and died in 1762 in Halifax. During this period most Mi'kmaq had become Catholics. For many of them the main reason to mark their belonging to the Catholic church was that it was a way to keep their distance towards the English and the colonizers' attempts to anglicize the Mi'kmaq. One of Maillard's important achievements was to transfer Christian hymns to a pictorial text, which certain Mi'kmaq were given instructions to read. The signs probably built on the ones Le Clercq had initiated.[38] To keep the reading of the hieroglyphs alive, and

---

[34] Le Clercq 1691/1968: 126.

[35] Smith 1977: 84.

[36] Dièreville 1708/1933: 2.

[37] Rand (1850: 30p.) writes how the Mi'kmaq in the middle of the 19th century still speak about Maillard and his deeds.

[38] Since the pictorial writing designed by Le Clercq has not been found, we do not know how much of the signs the 18th century prayer book has in common with the older signs. For generations Mi'kmaq have used the prayer book, often as a way of marking their distinctiveness and resistance towards the English attempts to anglicize the group. The era of centralization (1940s and 1950s), when the government tried to force the Mi'kmaq to leave their small reserves and settle on two reserves, one on the mainland (Shubenacadie) and

thereby make the mission easier, the missionary Father Pacifique in 1921 published a *Manual of Prayers, Instructions, Psalms, and Hymns in Micmac Ideograms.*

Studies in history and ethnography

In addition to historical documents *from* the first contacts there are monographs *about* this time. A very ambitious work that describes the first contacts between Mi'kmaq and Europeans is Bernard Hoffman's (1946) *The Historical Ethnography of the Micmac of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries.* The aim of Hoffman is to reconstruct Mi'kmaq culture before and shortly after the first cultural contacts. He realizes the difficulties in finding specific historical data and explains his own method: to present primary historical information, critically analyze it, and juxtapose it with comparative data from ethnographic studies to find out if he can use the latter to reconstruct and interpret the past. Hoffman displays an impressive amount of facts about historical Mi'kmaq culture, but there is a danger in juxtaposing ethnographical data from the 19th century with the lifeworld of a 17th century Mi'kmaq. These two lifeworlds differ a lot. One example worth mentioning is how the powerful and highly ranked, 17th century healer (*buoin*) was transformed in the 19th century to a wicked sorcerer, among other things because of a successful mission. When Hoffman reads the legends of Rand from the 19th century in order to complete the picture of the 17th century *buoin* the comparison does not do full justice to this person. The danger is always that the originally highly prestigious person is ascribed characteristics that belong to a later development.[39]

Alfred Bailey writes about the same period of time as Hoffman in *The Conflict of European and Eastern Algonkin Cultures 1504-1700: A Study in*

---

the other one on the island of Cape Breton (Eskasoni), and the Christian boarding school, had serious consequences for the kinship-based networks through which traditional knowledge, including the ability to read and write the hieroglyphs, were transmitted from the Elders to the younger generation (Schmidt & Marshall 1995: 15). Today there is a new interest in learning the hieroglyphs. In the 1980s The Micmac Association for Cultural Studies sponsored several seminars on pictorial reading led by an Elder, William Prosper. At the University College of Cape Breton, Sydney, there are now special courses in reading and writing these signs. To learn more about Mi'kmaq pictorial signs, the work by David Schmidt and Murdena Marshall (1995) *Mi'kmaq Hieroglyphic Prayers: Readings in North America's First Indigenous Script* is recommended, in which the reader both gets a short historical background to this special writing and a rich collection of important Christian texts. There are other scholars who have been interested in this writing, e.g. Lenhart (1932) and Hewson (1991). The Micmac Association of Cultural Studies also collected hymns during the 1980s and published them in a *Micmac Hymnal*.

[39] Erickson 1978.

Canadian Civilisation (1937), but broadens his geographical and historical perspective to include more Algonkin groups than the Mi'kmaq. In Leslie Upton's work (1979), *Micmacs and Colonists: Indian-White Relations in the Maritimes 1713-1867*, the meeting between the Mi'kmaq and the British colonizers is the central issue. E. Hutton (1961) has also worked primarily with historical material. Patterns that were a result of the meeting between cultures of the Old and New World have been shown to be persistent and survive even today. Jennifer Reid (1995) tries to lay bare the mechanisms that in early Acadia generated alienation between the Mi'kmaq and the colonizers. By studying e.g. myths she finds an answer: both groups carried a deep human wish to feel rooted. The focus is on place, country, and a common, human wish to feel "at home" by creating one's own landscape and lifeworld. For Acadia the colonization from now on meant that the Mi'kmaq and the English would be competing with each other both over the right to the land and over the interpretation of the landscape.

The influence of the Catholic Church over Mi'kmaq life is described in many studies. A more general view of the Catholic mission in Nova Scotia is given by Angus Johnston (1960). George Gibson (1939) has specialized in the early Jesuit mission in the province, and J. Kennedy (1950) depicts how the images of the "savage" developed in the meeting between Jesuits and Indians. In J. Hanington's (1984) *Every Popish Person: The Story of Roman Catholicism in Nova Scotia and the Church of Halifax 1604-1984*, a whole chapter is devoted to the "apostle" of the Mi'kmaq, Abbé Pierre Maillard. The most important religious celebration for many Mi'kmaq, St. Anne's Day, is described in many articles. Janet Chute (1992) gives an historical recapitulation of the feast with its changes over time in "Ceremony, Social Revitalization and Change: Micmac Leadership and the Annual Festival of St. Anne".

During the second part of the 19th century Mi'kmaq oral traditions began to be collected and documented. The two most important collections are Silas Rand's *Legends of the Micmacs* (1894) and Charles Leland's *The Algonquin Legends of New England* (1884).[40] Other scholars have published stories from Mi'kmaq oral tradition, for example Speck (1915), Parsons (1925, 1926), Michelson (1925), Hagar (1895, 1896, 1897) and Fauset (1925), most of which was published in the *Journal of American Folklore*[41]. Some scholars

[40] T. Parkhill (1997) has devoted a whole monograph to Leland and his work, in which he has shown that both the personal background of Leland and the Romantic images about the "Indian" influenced the content and structure of Leland's edition of the legends.

[41] Hagar 1895 was published in *American Anthropologist*.

have focused on Mi'kmaq shamanism, e.g. Johnson (1943) and Erickson (1978).

During the 20th century ethnographic monographs about the Mi'kmaq were written. Wilson Wallis had the ambition to sort out older beliefs from contemporary ethnographic data. His report from fieldwork in 1911-1912, with a short return in 1953 (then with his wife Ruth), is one of the most detailed fieldwork monographs about the Mi'kmaq, *The Micmac Indians of Eastern Canada* (1955). Besides most valuable documentation of Mi'kmaq material culture he gives us a rich collection of stories from their oral tradition. Another early description of Mi'kmaq culture is by F. Speck: *Beothuk and Micmac* (1922). Speck examines the distribution of the different hunting grounds among bands and families. P. Bock started his fieldwork in 1961, before the debate on ethnicity became an important issue in the 1970s. He restricted his investigations to the Restigouche reserve: *The Micmac Indians of Restigouche: History and Contemporary Description* (1966).

Influenced by the theories of ethnicity of the social anthropologist F. Barth[42], H. McGee (1974) wrote a survey of Mi'kmaq history and of how the tribe during the 1970s shaped their ethnic identity. The social anthropologist T. Larsen carried out his fieldwork on the island of Cape Breton and published a paper entitled "Negotiating Identity: The Micmac of Nova Scotia.", in Tanner (1983). In this text he discusses how a Mi'kmaq identity is generated in a special context and how, in the meeting with mainstream society, it becomes a constant object for negotiation: to be accepted or to be rejected. D. Moore (1983) also writes about ethnic groups and the multicultural politics in Canada. H. Prins did his fieldwork among the Mi'kmaq in northern Maine and describes his experiences in *The Mi'kmaq: Resistance, Accommodation and Cultural Survival* (1996). Prins says that the Mi'kmaq, in spite of hard pressure from the colonial power, have kept their status as a group: "It seems a miracle that the Mi'kmaq should survive this long-term apocalypse, but survive they did. They are currently enjoying both a burst in population and a revitalization of their culture as well as their sociopolitical status."[43]

The growing interest in environmental issues during the 1980s and 1990s engaged many Mi'kmaq, since they in different ways were affected by the environmental threats. When the Swedish pulp mill company Stora Kopparberg had large forest areas in Nova Scotia sprayed with pesticides, this

[42] Barth 1969.
[43] Prins 1996: ix.

aroused strong protests among the Mi'kmaq who chose to send one of their representatives, together with some non-native environmental activists, to Sweden to stress the serious nature of the issue. The Mi'kmaq's environmental engagement has been described in articles by Alf Hornborg (1994, 1998c).

A history of their own

The list of literature would not be complete if some of the rich collection of texts produced by the Mi'kmaq themselves were not mentioned. Their own newspapers, *Micmac News* (now discontinued) and *Micmac Maliseet Nations News*[44], meant a lot for spreading news to the reserves. The department of Mi'kmaq Studies at the University College of Cape Breton is an important forum for producing Mi'kmaq texts. The poet Rita Joe, today well known in Canada for her poems (1978, 1988/1991, 1991) and her autobiography (1996), writes about daily life on the reserve. Isabelle Knockwood in *Out of the Depths* (1992) recalls her painful experience from the boarding schools which many Mi'kmaq children were sent to. Daniel Paul rereads and reinterprets historical documents in *We Were Not the Savages: A Micmac Perspective on the Collision of European and Aboriginal Civilizations* (1993). In the foreword the author emphasizes the importance of Mi'kmaq raising their voices to give as complete a picture as possible of Mi'kmaq history: "There can be no real peace in Canada until the nation assumes responsibility for its past crimes against humanity and makes amends to the Micmac and other Canadian Tribes for the indescribable horrors it subjected them to."[45]

History

The traditional form of subsistence among the Mi'kmaq was hunting and fishing. The composition and localization of the settlement varied during the different seasons. In the fall the Mi'kmaq were divided into smaller groups to hunt moose and caribou. When spring arrived they joined together again to fish along the shores or in the rivers. The groups belonged to different districts, each with its own chief. During the summer the different bands with

[44] *Micmac News* was published in 1969-1992. Several extra issues were also printed during these years, e.g. about Mi'kmaq treaties (December 1970) and *The Mi'kmaq Treaty Handbook* (September 1987). *Micmac Maliseet Nations News* was started in 1990 by The Confederacy of Mainland Micmacs.
[45] Paul 1993: foreword.

their local chiefs would gather in councils to discuss matters important to the tribe.

News about rich fishing waters off the coast of Nova Scotia were rapidly spread in Europe at the beginning of the 16th century. Fishermen from Portugal, England and France crossed the Atlantic Ocean every year to return with their fishing boats loaded with fish.[46] The Europeans were soon aware of what richness the new continent carried. There was, for instance, a lot of value in the pelts the Natives used as exchange goods for European products. A lot of factors would later on decisively affect the future of the Mi'kmaq. Trade, missions and epidemics followed each other hand in hand. The war between England and France also involved the Mi'kmaq and had negative consequences for them. In the 19th century the coastal provinces were invaded by new settlers and immigrants which gave Mi'kmaq traditional life its final and fatal stab. They lost their land and were forced to settle on reserves.

Diseases

Demographically, the meeting with the Europeans became a disaster for the Mi'kmaq. It is very difficult to know how many they were before the Europeans arrived in the 16th century and first made contact with them. Epidemic diseases which the Mi'kmaq had no immunity against quickly reduced the tribe by what some scholars assume to be 90%.[47] It is hard, however, to make reliable estimates, and they vary between 6,000 and 100,000. One figure in between these extremes is 35,000.[48] The missionary Biard estimates the population at the beginning of the 17th century at about 2,000-3,000. The Chief Membertou tells a missionary that in his youth the Mi'kmaq were as numerous as the hairs on his head. But, he adds, European diseases and new, destructive customs had spread and exterminated whole villages. His description from the beginning of the 17th century shows how contact with the French had influenced the whole traditional way of life:

> Membertou assures us that in his youth he has seen *chimonutz*, that is to say, Savages, as thickly planted there as the hairs upon his head. It is maintained that they have thus diminished since the French have begun to frequent their country; for, since then they do

[46] Hutton 1961: 52. Azorian fishermen called Newfoundland for "Land of Baccolos" (cod) (Miller 1989: 24), cf. Bailey 1937: 19.
[47] Whitehead 1991: 77, Prins 1996: 2.
[48] Upton 1979: 195.

> nothing all summer but eat; and the result is that, adopting an entirely different custom and thus breeding new diseases, they pay for their indulgence during the autumn and winter by pleurisy, quinsy and dysentery, which kill them off. During this year alone sixty have died at Cape de la Hève, which is the greater part of those who lived there ...[49]

The missionaries were certainly not aware that they spread dangerous viruses, but stories bear witness to the contamination they brought. One upset Indian woman blames the Black Coats (Jesuits) for the death of her friends. She interprets their preaching and baptizing as curses and black magic and says one piece of proof is how quickly people die as soon as the newcomers settle down in a village. When the missionaries move their settlement the same thing happens at the new site. The only ones who were saved were the ones who refused to let them visit their houses.[50] One thing is sure, the diseases took their victims among all categories of humans. Children as well as mighty chiefs and *buoin*[51] died. Membertou also died of the epidemics, probably of dysentery. Losing children, family providers and important key persons in the tribe in only a few decades must have shaken the Mi'kmaq's world order. Traditionally it was the *buoin* who recreated order when chaos threatened, but with the new plagues they did not stand a chance. In fact they themselves became victims.

Trade and the Mission

During the 17th century trade relations were intensified. For the Europeans it was initially the rich fishing waters that attracted them but after contacts with indigenous groups a more extensive exchange began in which the Indians provided the foreigners with furs and in return received food, weapons, and hardware. The French managed to establish good trading relations with the Mi'kmaq and founded a trade station on Sainte-Croix Island in 1604. After a hard winter of sufferings, when half of the population died from scurvy, the settlers were forced to move to a new harbor. They called their new place Port Royal. Thanks to the Mi'kmaq, many of the newcomers were saved from starving to death during the hard Canadian winter. The Mi'kmaq gave them fresh meat, informed the French if a new ship was sighted that could threaten

[49] *Jesuit Relations* 1959, I: 177.
[50] Jaenen 1974: 275.
[51] Spiritual leaders that were called upon, for instance, when somebody was sick or for hunting expeditions.

their trade monopoly, and also aided them if hostile Indian groups came along. Mi'kmaq friendship was repaid with more weapons and European products. Some European men married Mi'kmaq women, which created strong alliances between the two cultures and facilitated trade.

With the trading ships the first missionaries also arrived. The first Catholic priest was Abbé Nicholas Aubray, who sailed on De Mont's ship to Nova Scotia in 1604.[52] Because of hard conditions in the colony during the first years the missionaries also became sick and even died of scurvy. The new leader of the colony, Poutrincourt, brought a new Catholic priest, Jessé Fleché, from France to the province in 1610. This priest baptized several Mi'kmaq in the same year, among them the powerful chief Membertou in the vicinity of Port Royal.[53] Since Membertou's group at this time was in conflict with other Native groups in the area it is possible that a primary motive of the old Chief was to create a strategic alliance with the growing French colony, rather than the conversion in itself:

> They accepted baptism as a sort of sacred pledge of friendship and alliance with the French. As regards Christ, the Church, the Faith and the Symbol, the commandments of GOD, prayer and the Sacraments, they knew almost nothing; nor did they know the sign of the cross or the very name of Christian. So, even now, whenever we ask any one, 'Are you a Christian?' every one of them answers that he does not understand what we are asking him. But when we change the form of our question and ask, 'Are you baptized?' he assents and declares himself to be already almost a Norman, for they call the French in general Normans.[54]

Missionary writings from the 17th century about successful missions must be understood as very biased documents. We must not forget that it was the missionaries who were the writers of history; they wanted to appear in a favorable light for their superiors. For the Mi'kmaq, who gathered around the trade stations and became dependent on exchanging goods, the new way of life began to change their traditional lifeworld. However, many still lived a

---

[52] De Monts was a merchant and Calvinist and had a monopoly on the fur trade in Acadia (New France) (*Jesuit Relations* 1959, I: 4).

[53] Lescarbot in *Jesuit Relations* 1959, I: 77.

[54] *Jesuit Relations* 1959, II: 89.

mobile life and would continue with this until the competition for land between them and the settlers grew harder.

If the French had a wish to monopolize trade and assimilate and baptize the Mi'kmaq, the Mi'kmaq themselves saw their new partners as allies and accepted a life in symbiosis with the new culture from the East. But the equal exchange of services and goods was gradually transformed into a Mi'kmaq dependency on European goods and a dissolution of their society. Many factors in addition to the dependency on goods would contribute to the change. One was the hunt on fur-bearing animals that nearly extirpated many important animal species, e.g. beaver and moose. When the access to pelts was gone, so were the possibilities to get French products. Another factor, as mentioned earlier, was the European diseases that continued to claim many victims. To the demographic and material changes must be added the cultural effects of the mission. The missionaries were very concerned about civilizing a culture that they saw as less developed than their own. This challenged the traditional cosmology, which was already undermined by the fur trade. When the animals were exploited, the belief in a bond between animals and humans was dissolved.[55] The missionaries gave an alternative explanation, according to which a human was the "crown of creation" and nature empty of the spiritual power that Mi'kmaq tradition had ascribed to it.

Fighting for the land

It was not only the French who showed an interest in the land in the West. There was a large demand for beaver pelts and moose hides in Europe and there was much profit to derive from this trade. New France would soon get into a struggle with England, mainly over the fur trade. The settlers in Port Royal did not experience any longer period of stability before the Englishman Samuel Argall attacked them in 1613 and a hard war over the control of the colony broke out. The conflict between the Mi'kmaq, the English, and the French continued into the 18th and 19th centuries. The war between the English and the French also cost lives among the Mi'kmaq, who early on had allied themselves with the latter. When the overhunting of animals had caused a lack of pelts, the alliance with the French was a way for the Mi'kmaq to continue to have access to weapons and goods. Through the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 the British controlled mainland Nova Scotia. French missionaries had the right to work in the province as long as they acknowledged British

[55] Upton 1979: 19.

authority. Cape Breton was still under French jurisdiction and many Mi'kmaq fled to the island. But it was not all who chose to leave the mainland controlled by the English. Although they were promised gunpowder and goods as compensation when moving, they did not want to leave their hunting grounds. During the 1720s the struggle between the English and the Mi'kmaq grew harder and became an open war. English soldiers were promised bounties for every Mi'kmaq they killed. Documents from the 18th century reveal a planned genocide:

> For these causes we, by and with the advice and consent of His Majesty's Council, do hereby authorize and command all Officers Civil and Military, and all His Majesty's Subjects or others, to annoy, distress, take or destroy the savages commonly called Micmacks wherever they are found, and all such as are aiding and assisting them; and we further by and with the consent and advice of His Majesty's Council do promise a reward of Ten Guineas for every Indian, Mick-mack, taken or killed to be paid upon producing such savages taken or his scalp (as is the custom of America) if killed, to the Officers commanding at Halifax, Annapolis Royal or Minas.[56]

The Mi'kmaq had to watch their allies − the French − being deported from the province in 1755. The French missionaries tried to help the Mi'kmaq, among other things by writing letters to the English authorities.[57] A hard blow for the Mi'kmaq was when the town of Louisbourg in 1758 fell into the hands of the enemy. Now the English controlled the entire province. With the defeat of Louisbourg it became harder for the Mi'kmaq to maintain contact with their French allies who had given them goods, weapons, and gun powder. Without weapons the hunting was harder and there were fewer pelts, which they needed in the trade with the Europeans.[58] The English began an anti-Catholic policy and Catholic priests were forced to leave the country in 1759. Tired of war, the Mi'kmaq negotiated a peace with the English in 1763. Among the English there was a strong wish that the Mi'kmaq would convert to Anglicanism, so in 1764 they decided not to send any Catholic priests to the province. The Anglican Missionary Society for the Propagation of the Gospel

[56] Whitehead 1991: 117, cf. Weyler 1992: 270.

[57] The missionary Maillard wrote a letter in 1746 to the English for the Mi'kmaq; they wanted their land to be left in peace, otherwise war would result (Upton 1979: 51p.).

[58] Upton 1979: 57.

(SPG) was assigned the responsibility of evangelization.[59] The Mi'kmaq, however, threatened to destroy English settlements if they did not get a Catholic priest back in the province. Under this threat, the English complied with the Mi'kmaq wish and allowed the Catholic priest Bailly to work in the province. They also allowed some of the deported French to return to the province and together with the Mi'kmaq these were also allowed their priests.

During the 18th century the Catholic Church became an important support for the Mi'kmaq against British colonial power. Catholicism often became a buffer between the Mi'kmaq and the Protestant mission. It was probably during the 18th century that the Catholic celebration of St. Anne's Day grew in importance to several days of celebration and ended with a procession to honor the saint. An important person in this context was Abbé Maillard. With the help of his prayerbook, the Mi'kmaq could continue on their own with Christian studies, even if there were no priests among them.

Settlers and the life on the reserves

Competition over food and land had steadily grown since the end of the 18th century. Halifax was founded in 1749 and would in time become an important Atlantic harbor. The deathblow against the Mi'kmaq came after the American War of Independence when many English loyalists moved to Canada. The population of Nova Scotia grew to three times its former size in 1782, to 42,000. At the beginning of the 19th century many poor immigrants arrived from Europe. Between 1815 and 1838, for example, 40,000 Scots settled in Nova Scotia. During 1847, when the potato harvest was destroyed on Ireland, 17,000 Irish arrived in New Brunswick.[60] For the Mi'kmaq this meant that great land areas from now on were occupied by settlers. Since the Mi'kmaq traditionally subsisted as hunters and gatherers their nomadic life was disturbed by the White settlements encroaching on their hunting grounds. Prey had already become scarce because of the intensive fur trade. The White settlers were also interested in hunting. During the year 1789 alone, they killed 9,000 moose on Cape Breton, largely for the hides.[61] Salmon rivers were blocked by dams or polluted by saw mills. The Mi'kmaq headed towards a demographic disaster. As the Mi'kmaq were starving and deprived of their former hunting territories, in 1820 a proposal was worked out concerning reserves. In the Indian Act of 1842 there is a suggestion as to how their

[59] Upton 1979: 65.
[60] Prins 1996: 163, cf. Miller 1989: 88, and Weyler 1992: 270.
[61] Upton 1979: 128p.

situation could improve: A Mi'kmaq who started farming would get economic aid and on the reserve a house would be built for the Chief, also a school and a church.[62] But in the matter of subsistence the allotments were of lower quality than in other areas in the province and no guarantee was given against White "encroachers". The idea of sending their children to school did not meet with any sympathy among the Mi'kmaq. They said that they had an adequate tradition to hand on to their children and that their religion was founded on the teaching of the Catholic priests. In those days it was also common for the families to own one of the prayer books based on Maillard's writings.[63]

The Mi'kmaq slowly transformed from a guarantee for the survival of the European in the province to an impoverished proletariat and a burden for the colony. The rebellion against the British had turned into resignation. In his report from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick in 1841, a Commissioner for Indian Affairs described the high mortality in the province. In New Brunswick he met older, childless couples who said that they had had 8-12 children but that they had all died of measles, typhus, small pox, whooping cough, etc.[64] Another witness to the Mi'kmaq situation describes their miserable life in 1848:

> Almost the whole Micmac population is now vagrants, who wander from place to place, and door to door, seeking alms. The aged and infirm are supplied with written briefs upon which they place much reliance. They are clad in filthy rags. Necessity often compels them to consume putrid and unwholesome food. The offal of the slaughterhouse is their portion. Their camps or wigwams are seldom comfortable, and in winter, at places where they are not permitted to cut wood, they suffer from the cold. The sufferings of the sick and infirm surpass description, and from the lack of a humble degree of accommodation, almost every case of disease proves fatal. In almost every encampment are seen the crippled, the deaf, and blind, the helpless orphan, with individuals lingering in consumption, which spares neither young nor old. During my inquiries into the actual state of these people in June last, I found four orphan children who were unable to rise for the want of food – whole families were subsisting upon wild roots and eels, and the withered features

[62] Upton 1979: 90.
[63] Ralstone 1981: 485.
[64] McGee 1974: 83.

> of others told too plainly to be misunderstood, that they had nearly approached starvation.[65]

According to the Protestant missionary Silas Rand many of the coastal Mi'kmaq lived on reserves, but they still used *wigwams* and had a mobile life in the middle of the 19th century. But during the 40 years Rand worked with the group he noticed a steady change towards a more European lifestyle. At the end of the century most Mi'kmaq had settled on the reserves. Since the fur trade had ceased because of overhunting of beavers, some had small farms, some worked as guides or plaited baskets to sell. After Canadian Independence in 1867 the federal government assumed responsibility for the future of the Natives. The new nation continued the British assimilation policy. Successful individuals were encouraged to leave the reserves and become a part of the Canadian nation. The reserves were looked upon as places for less ambitious members of the tribe who had not managed to find a place in mainstream society.[66]

During the 19th century the Mi'kmaq continued to gather in July to celebrate St. Anne's Day. The number of participants increased strongly during this century and even attracted Whites. When Bishop Colin F. McKinnon visited Chapel Island in 1852, eight priests and 3,000 participants (including 762 Mi'kmaq) had gathered to honor the patron saint.[67] During the years when there were hardly any Catholic priests in the province, the basic ritual of the festival probably survived thanks to the Band Captains using Maillard's prayer book. Mi'kmaq traditions had been interwoven with the Catholic ritual and often priests in ceremonies had to follow Mi'kmaq requirements more than the Catholic orthodoxy. Many White settlers found it difficult to accept a Mi'kmaq Catholicism and preferred to look upon their Catholic brothers as heathens. The Protestant priests appreciated that the Catholic priests were teaching the Mi'kmaq to respect law and the property of the White settlers, but at the same time they had their own opinions about the Catholic mission's tolerance of Mi'kmaq features in the Christian faith. A historian from New Brunswick meant that "the Catholics had achieved their control of the Indians

---

[65] Whitehead 1991: 237pp.

[66] McGee (1983: 95): "The reserves were maintained in a paternalistic manner as places of residence for the incorrigible."

[67] Upton 1979: 157.

by playing on their love of pageantry and by allowing paganism to continue under a veneer of Christianity".[68]

St. Anne's celebration also fulfilled an important political function since Mi'kmaq leaders could address a great number of participants.[69] Since the time of Maillard, the most important meeting place was Chapel Island[70] on Cape Breton. The main leaders among the Mi'kmaq (*Grand Chief*, *Grand Captain* and *Grand Council*) always participated there.

Thanks to the Rand collection from the end of the 19th century, some of the Mi'kmaq oral traditions were saved for posterity. Other scholars' works show that at the end of the century there was a belief among the Mi'kmaq in "the good old days", a pre-Columbian period of happiness. A main character in Mi'kmaq oral tradition was Kluskap, a culture hero who still lived so close to his people that he could help them when needed. But during the first part of the 20th century important changes occurred on the reserves. The material standard increased. The houses were restored from shacks in 1912 to "welfare houses" and were equipped with Western furniture. Women followed mainstream society's fashions and became more open in meetings with strangers than they had been at the beginning of the century. Old stories faded and new, Western traditions were introduced, such as celebrating birthdays and Father's and Mother's Day.[71] In the 1950s everybody had a Christmas tree and the children were excitedly waiting for Santa to come. The Mi'kmaq hunter had finally been modernized into a Western citizen.

A modern history

In spite of improvements on the reserves, development did not move forward as quickly as it did in the main society. The economic depression in the 1930s put an end to many Native dreams of being equal parts of Canadian society. Unemployment struck them harder than the rest of the population. There was a short improvement during the Second World War, but the difficulties of getting a job continued, although some now had an education: "They learned that discrimination operated against educated as well as uneducated Indians."[72] To modernize and become a Canadian would be a painful experience for many Mi'kmaq. The Department of Indian Affairs between 1941-1953

[68] Upton 1979: 155.
[69] Chute 1992: 58.
[70] Mi'kmaq name the island Potloteg.
[71] Wallis & Wallis (1953) described the changes as "culture loss".
[72] Bock 1987: 119.

tried to bring together the Mi'kmaq into two big reserves, Eskasoni on Cape Breton and Shubenacadie on the mainland. The relocation, which in many cases destroyed local communities, was a huge failure. Together with boarding schools that would transform Mi'kmaq children into Canadians, it meant traumatic changes that still today are remembered among the Mi'kmaq as a dark age in the past.[73]

The latter part of the 20th century has brought a new interest among the Mi'kmaq for Mi'kmaq identity and an increasing demand for land rights and participation in important political questions. The right for the Mi'kmaq to vote without giving up their Native status was granted as late as 1960. An attempt by the Canadian government to implement the so-called White Paper in 1969, that would make all Native groups lose their status as Natives and simply be members of Canadian society raised violent protests all over the country and had to be put on the shelf in 1971.[74] In Nova Scotia the newly established Union of Nova Scotia Indians (UNSI)[75] grew strong from emphasizing their opposition against the dissolution of their status as Natives. An explanation for the success of UNSI might be that the organization emphasized the positive values of being Mi'kmaq and demanded recognition from Canadian society, rather than charity.

The growth of the American Indian Movement (AIM) during the 1960s[76] and the struggle at Pine Ridge reverberated even among the Mi'kmaq and in their way of being "Indian". Many of them became interested in Native traditions and during the 1970s and 1980s ethnicity grew strong on the reserves. The young generation once again started to listen to Kluskap stories, but this time they had help from a television series, produced in Halifax: "The Adventures of Glooskap".[77]

Today most of the Mi'kmaq live on reserves.[78] Reserve life still means problems but there are also advantages. Among the problems are low education, unemployment, high suicide rate, poverty, and drugs, which further lead

---

[73] Cf. Knockwood 1992.

[74] Roosens 1989/1991: 22p, cf. Miller 1989: 226pp.

[75] UNSI was established in 1969.

[76] AIM − American Indian Movement − was an attempt to resurrect the "Indian". It was founded in the 1960s in prisons and among urban Natives and grew stronger in the 1970s. Protests against White society found their strongest expression in the events on Pine Ridge reserve, where traditionalists and representatives from AIM were fighting the FBI and the Chief of Pine Ridge Band Council, Richard Wilson (Matthiessen 1980/1991).

[77] Bock 1966: 85.

[78] Davis 1992: 59.

to physical disease, depression, divorce, and different kinds of abuse. To advantages belong the way in which separation from mainstream society has preserved the use of the Mi'kmaq language. Furthermore, there is a great value in living close to friends and relatives and a pride in being Mi'kmaq. Some traditions are recreated in this partly pan-Indian spirit and nourished at the various *powwows.*[79] The Mi'kmaq of today want to define their identity, as exemplified by how their own newspaper, the *Mi'kmaq Maliseet Nations News*, devotes space in September 1992 to characterizing *Native Culture* and *Native Spirituality*. From having been forced to a life on reserves, Mi'kmaq of today often want to be a part of modern society without leaving the reserves.[80]

The confrontation in Oka in 1990, when the Mohawk managed to stop a planned golf course on Native land, also felt like a victory to the Mi'kmaq.[81] Oka came to represent centuries of struggle between Europeans and Natives, but this time with another result: the strong protests by the Natives and their armed resistance were successful. Several Mi'kmaq participated in the Oka struggle. Like the Mohawk, they organized themselves into a Warrior Society. With their experience from Oka, the Mi'kmaq Warrior Society in 1990 played an important role in mobilizing resistance against a planned superquarry at Kelly's Mountain. To some Mi'kmaq the mountain was known as Kluskap's Mountain and belonged to their culture hero. The struggle against the quarry received a great deal of attention in the media and prompted Mi'kmaq traditionalists and Catholics to cooperate in demanding that Canadian society should respect Mi'kmaq treaties and traditions. Furthermore, many years of struggles with environmental issues involving cooperation with the green movement had inspired a strong assertion of Mi'kmaq concerns for the environment as founded on a worldview in which spirituality and a moral responsibility for Mother Earth were as important as ecological considerations.

But the neo-traditionalism of the Mi'kmaq was met with skepticism by some Whites who looked upon the revival of traditions (e.g. *sweat lodge, pipe ceremonies*) as strategic constructions, created to gain advantages in main society. There is, of course, a rift between modern, "constructed" culture and the culture that disappeared with colonization. Today the Mi'kmaq are part of a society in which the individual can choose identity according to a great variety of different situations.

---

[79] *Powwow* is a pan-Indian feast with drumming, chanting and dancing.

[80] McGee 1974: 102.

[81] About the Oka-conflict see Nabokov 1978/1991: 433, and Weyler 1992: 299.

One acknowledgment from the mainstream society which has given the Mi'kmaq opportunities to work more systematically with relevant issues was the establishment of a department of Mi'kmaq studies at the University College of Cape Breton (UCCB). Their own newspapers, *Micmac News* and *Micmac Maliseet Nations News*, have also been important arenas for Native issues, where Mi'kmaq writers have provided images of their people alternative to those of the main society. In order to increase the Mi'kmaq's possibilities to shape their own future, the Eskasoni reserve on Cape Breton in September 1998 opened a well-equipped High School. Only 5% of Mi'kmaq students had previously completed high school. Young people gave different reasons for dropping out. Some said that they did not feel at home in an off-reserve school. Others mentioned racism or culture clash as reasons for leaving school. For many parents it has been an important step forward to have their children receive higher education without leaving the reserves. They hope that home district education will make it easier for the youngsters to learn more about Mi'kmaq culture, to be proud of their culture, and most of all, to stay in school. One of the parents says: "We believe our students will do better in an environment where our culture is an integral part of the curriculum ... There is little, if any mention of Micmac culture in the public high schools and it sends a message to our children that our way of life is not important."[82]

In spite of growing traditionalism in the 1970s and 1980s, Catholicism is still an important part of Mi'kmaq life. Many Mi'kmaq say that they are Catholics and look upon Catholicism as a part of their tradition. For many of them there is no problem in both partaking in the Catholic festival of St. Anne and joining a pan-Indian *sweat lodge*. St. Anne's Day is still, in the 1990s, the greatest celebration and gathers thousands of participants. But when the traditionalists in 1996 wanted to arrange a *powwow* on Chapel Island the week before the beginning of St. Anne's Day, the *Grand Council* declined. When I came to the festival I was told that one of the reasons was that the island is a place where the Saint and the Mi'kmaq meet. Some disappointed traditionalists then chose to stay home, but most of them did not feel any conflict about going to the island. Their main interest was not to join the Church services and the Sunday procession but to take the opportunity to meet friends and relatives.

---

[82] *The Globe and Mail*, 22 June, 1998.

II. LOCAL LIFEWORLDS AND ABSTRACT CONSTRUCTIONS: ON THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL FOUNDATION OF INDIAN ROMANTICISM

Nature and culture as separate entities or as a unit

The encounter with the Native inhabitants of America became a perplexing experience for the Europeans. The images of the Indians projected in historical descriptions are thus contradictory. In many cases the Mi'kmaq are portrayed as generous and kind-hearted by the missionaries, but there are also instances when they are ridiculed and described as barbarians with a conduct that is more reminiscent of animals than human beings. The image of the "child of nature" as either savage or wise would be discussed by European intellectuals again and again during the following centuries. In *Leviathan* Hobbes warned that the nature of mankind could develop into a chaotic condition if a powerful state did not tame its bestiality. Rousseau, on the contrary, saw a more noble way of being in the uncivilized society. Both notions expressed cultural models of human nature that emphasized a dichotomy between the physical organism and the reflective being.[1] The philosophy of Descartes was an important cornerstone in the construction of this dualism between body and thought, nature and reason (culture). According to Descartes body and mind were totally different entities. A body has an extension in space, but cannot think, the mind has the capability of reflection but has no form or extension in space. Matter, according to him, was essentially mindless and it was only humans who had a soul that dwelt in the body, though separated from it.

The wild and chaotic part of nature was intrinsic to the body of a human being, thereby continuously threatening society, since it could harm the order created by reason. The chaotic forces were thought to appear fully visible in the savage, who missionaries and explorers generally believed to lack civilization and to be an expression of genuine nature to a greater extent than a cultivated person (read a Westerner). Undisciplined nature could also erupt in

[1] Merchant 1980/1994, 1992, Ingold 1996, Evernden 1985/1993.

a woman, who was considered not to possess the same moral strength and rational self-control as a man. The culture elite of the Renaissance spent much time defining the boundaries between themselves, and the uncivilized children of nature. In the 16th century the Spanish king Charles V organized a debate on the subject of how the Indians should be Christianized. The debate about how the work should proceed − with the aid of violence or peacefully − was held between Sepúlveda and Las Casas. The latter preferred a more gentle mission: the Indian was like fertile soil, ready to till, and be integrated in the Christian world according to the divine calling.[2] In such debates Westerners are portrayed as civilized, learned, and artistic, in short a people of culture. "The Others" − such as the Indians − were pagan, uncivilized, incapable of deeper theoretical insights and inhuman, in short destined to yield to the Europeans. With their supposed right and duty to dominate other peoples, the colonizers nourished an image of the Indian as a savage, or as a child who needed to be controlled or taken care of.[3] The limit that was drawn between nature and culture did not only function as a description of the world and society, it also comprised a power relation. The wilderness was the condition nature offered, if a human hand did not cultivate the land. The Indians, being a part of nature, were classified as wilderness, a raw material that demanded civilization for their liberation.[4]

Many scholars have written about the dichotomy nature-culture as a Western construction.[5] There is today an extensive discussion on how to understand how this dichotomy was generated. Historians such as Lynn White Jr. (1967), Carolyn Merchant (1980/1984), Christopher Vecsey (1980), Donald Hughes (1983/1996) and Robert Harrison (1996) give historical explanations to the division, while Calvin Martin (1992) and the anthropologist Tim Ingold (1996, 2000) apply a phenomenological perspective in analyzing how the dichotomy has gained a foothold (or is absent) in people's lifeworlds.

In 1967 in the journal *Science*, Lynn White Jr. published a controversial article, in which he presents Christianity as the historical root of the contemporary ecological crisis. Christians see Man as the image of God, and a tran-

---

[2] Green 1995: 13p, cf. Gill 1982: 7pp.

[3] Gill 1982: 7. Cf. Said's analysis (1978) of how the Oriental is constructed from the Occidental perspective in order to legitimate political interventions. The imaginary picture which is drawn, attributes to "the Other" that which the Westerner sees as undesirable, which thus makes his own, congratulatory self-image appear much clearer.

[4] Miller 1989: 8, Merchant 1980/1994, 1992, Ingold 1996, Evernden 1985/1993, Vecsey 1980: 4.

[5] Cf. Descola & Pálsson 1996. The main criteria for the scholars I have chosen to discuss below have been the ones who study Amerindian cosmologies.

scendental perception of God has resulted in the separation of humankind from the rest of creation: matter has become despiritualized. Christian anthropocentrism made Man the master of nature, and under a God who was separated from the substance of nature, Man was free to manipulate the environment.[6] According to White, the Christian worldview did not only separate human beings from the rest of creation, but also led to the belief that they constitutionally inhabit two worlds. One world was set aside only for Man, since only mankind had the gift of reason and the ability to create culture. But through the body Man also had access to the world of nature. Through this physical being Man shared that world with animals and plants, but also with non-animate objects like mountains and rocks.

Carolyn Merchant regards the polarity nature-culture as generated by the Renaissance (16th and 17th century) and subsequent scientific revolution.[7] Nature had earlier been described as an organism, a life-giving mother, or a human body, where each part contributed to the whole. But changes in ecology, economy, and society that preceded the Renaissance destroyed the image of nature as a perfect organism and men like Descartes, Hobbes, and Bacon formed a new perspective on the world as dead matter, a "machine" regulated by physical laws.[8] Humans occupy an exceptional position in this universe, since as images of God they are the only living beings with reason and thus able to control, dominate, and manipulate nature. Vecsey and Venables (1980) share Merchant's opinion that the Renaissance and the birth of modern science created a new way of looking at nature that was different from New World cosmologies. One of the main themes in their book *American Indian Environment* is to show how the Indians, "who saw their environments as the

---

[6] Cf. Bailey's (1937: 145) analysis of Algonkin society during the 16th and 17th century. The Christian faith contributed to a disenchantment of the world: "The material world tended to become 'despiritualized' by the teaching of the missionaries, and material objects were no longer thought of as possessing souls ... " White's article, of course, mobilized a defense from Christians, who point to the fact that the Christian heritage is much more complex and nuanced than the article suggests. Some examples of books that discuss White's article are Cooper (1990) *Green Christianity: Caring for the whole creation*, Birch (1990) *Liberating Life*, and Hallman (1994*) Ecotheology: Voices from South and North*.

[7] Merchant 1980/1994; cf. Bird-David 1993, and Ingold 1996.

[8] Merchant 1980/1994. In 1159 John of Salisbury presented in *Policraticus* a hierarchical model of the organic society. The prince and the priest represented the soul and the senate the heart, since the latter worked for the best for all. Other upholders of the organic worldview are della Porta (1535-1615) and Paracelsus (1490-1541). A mechanical vision of society and nature is given by Francis Bacon (1561-1621) in *The New Atlantis* (1624), and Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) in *Leviathan*. Descartes' (1596-1650) analysis of the human body in *L'Homme* and his development of a new, scientific method in *Discours de la méthode* became models for many generations.

sacred interdependence of the Creator's will, confronted waves of the post-Renaissance who saw in the environment a natural resource ordained by God for their sole benefit."[9] Like Merchant, Donald Hughes describes the difference between two ways of looking at nature: as a living organism or as dead matter. He writes that the colonialist's perception of nature was "a traditional European view of the natural environment, which denied that there is any spirit in nature, or anything intrinsically valuable about the things in nature."[10] The above scholars thus chose to discuss the issue as a distinction between viewing nature as dead matter or as spiritually animated. Robert Harrison discusses this distinction in a different way. He goes back even further in time than both Christianity and the development of modern science, and finds the contradiction as early as in the epic of Gilgamesh.[11] When Gilgamesh defeats the forest demon Huwawa, it is a triumph of culture (civilization), over nature (the untamed). Gilgamesh builds the walls around the town of Uruk. The walls represent not only a physical act by the creator of civilization, but also become a metaphor for the border between nature and culture. According to Harrison, it is the development of civilization that is the cause of the separation.

Like Harrison, Calvin Martin stresses how different perspectives on nature tend to be generated by different modes of residence. Martin speculates that the paradigm shift of viewing nature occurs during the Neolithic, when hunters became settled farmers. Permanent residence made Man alienated from nature, and nature became "uneconomical, an unruly thing in need of taming, draining, clearing, domestication, husbandry − all in all rendered into godly-human productivity, godly-human economy."[12] Since there still today exist groups of people who mainly subsist on hunting, Martin has been interested in how nature is viewed in the oral traditions of now living hunters: "To Western sensibilities, long since purged of such wildlife intimacies by the demystifying pressures of the Agricultural Revolution, Judeo-Christian teaching, rationalism, and the commercialization of the earth, such stories seem charming, and remote."[13]

---

[9] Vecsey & Venables 1980: x.
[10] Hughes 1983/1996: 105.
[11] Harrison 1996 in Gottlieb ed., pp. 63-66.
[12] Martin 1992: 67.
[13] Martin 1992: 7.

The turning point in Martin's academic life as a historian came when he did fieldwork among the Navaho and Yupiit. Instead of working with archives on distant groups, he now had the opportunity to experience their lifeworlds:

> I began my academic career by writing a book about Indians and animals (beavers mostly) and the fur trade. At that time I knew no Indians and had never laid eyes on a living beaver − I had learned it all from libraries. In the twenty years since, I have come to know beavers and I have lived, briefly, with Navahos and spent several years living among Eskimos ... The experience of it has changed me; it changed me as a scholar. I stopped doing 'research'.[14]

Martin's interest in formulating theoretical models changed into an engagement in the daily life of the Yupiit and became an attempt to understand their worldview from their own perspective, rather than forcing it into a prefabricated model. It was only through fieldwork that it became clear to Martin what were abstract constructions and what was the lived world.

Nature is a concept not easily applicable to non-Western cosmologies, since it derives from specific cultural (European) ideas about how the environment should be interpreted. Many anthropologists have, like Martin, experienced other ways of conceptualizing the environment. One scholar who early had an interest in such differences between worldviews was Irving Hallowell. In his now classical study of bear ceremonialism, he uses a hunter's cosmology to understand the hunter's behavior.[15] Hallowell has extended the concept of worldview from its more conventional, religious content to embrace the entire complex issue of how a people looks upon the world. In a later work on Ojibwa ontology he uses Robert Redfield's definition of worldview:

> It is the picture the members of a society have of the properties and characters upon their stage of action ... the way the world looks to that people looking out ... the way a man, in a particular society, sees himself in relation to all else. It is the properties of existence as distinguished from and related to the self. It is, in short, a man's idea of the universe. It is that organization of ideas which answers to a man the questions: Where am I? Among what do I move? What

[14] Martin 1999: x.
[15] Hallowell 1926.

> are my relations to these things? ... Self is the axis of 'world view'.[16]

The same object can be interpreted in separate ways by different individuals, if they inhabit different lifeworlds and thus view it from distinct perspectives or through different, meaningful pictures of the environment. By using a phenomenological approach, Ingold (2000) − like Hallowell and Martin − wants to look closely at the way humans produce knowledge. He emphasizes that human existence comprises a daily practical and perceptual *engagement* in the world of which a human takes part. If the indigenous peoples of the New World did not interpret their world in a dualistic way, as if nature was opposed to human culture, it would be paradoxical to construct models of their perspectives on *nature*. The concept "nature" is in itself already a cultural construction. Hallowell had warned that a description which might look like an objective presentation of a people's worldview could be a distortion, if the scholar had his or her own cultural model as a base for the interpretation: "It may be argued, in fact, that a thoroughgoing 'objective' approach to the study of cultures cannot be achieved solely by projecting upon those cultures categorical abstractions derived from Western thought. For in a broad sense, the latter are a reflection of *our* cultural subjectivity."[17] The traditional Ojibwa worldview is one example of a model that would not fit into a Western model, since the Ojibwa neither distinguished animals' way of being from humans' nor the supernatural from the natural.[18] The Algonkins, according to

---

[16] Robert Redfield cited in Hallowell 1960: 19pp. Cf. Kearney (1984: 41): "The world view of a people is their way of looking at reality. It consists of basic assumptions and images that provide a more or less coherent, though not necessarily accurate, way of thinking about the world. A world view comprises images of Self and of all that is recognized as not-Self, plus ideas about relationships between them ... "

[17] Hallowell 1960: 21.

[18] Hallowell 1926: 9. A parallel paradox is to speak about the Mi'kmaq traditional religion as if there was a clear boundary in their culture between a spiritual and profane relation to the world. The division had no counterpart among premodern Mi'kmaq. Their "religion" colored all aspects of being: hunting, living, medicine, etc. For example hunting or cooking, a secular activity for the Westerner, was surrounded by a number of restrictions and taboos among the Mi'kmaq. Hoffman (1946: 344) had already stressed that the separation of religion from other activities is first made by scholars at their desks and is a practical way of arranging their material: "It has become customary, in the presentation of descriptive ethnographies, to reserve discussion of matters concerning religion and the supernatural until most other facets of the culture have been covered. However useful this arbitrary cultural outline may be in preserving some manner of uniformity in the descriptive literature, it often results in violence to the spirit of such culture as that of the Micmacs *where all aspects are permeated by the supernatural*" [italics added]. Jaenen (1976: 56) shares Hoffman's view: "Religion permeated the entire culture and culture had no meaning or sense of direction without that religion".

Hallowell, instead had an image of an integrated universe, where the actions of different "persons" (animals as well as humans) functioned as an integrating force.[19] Ingold also emphasizes how society and nature in this type of worldview form *one* category, viz. the environment in which humans dwell.[20] Like Hallowell, he wants to start with people's everyday life in order to explain the Ojibwa model: for the Ojibwa hunter, the forest is not a temporary surrounding but a home. The Western elite found it more natural to distinguish society, created by man, from nature. For them the forest was an antithesis to home and the city, where artifacts were signs of the work of their ancestors. For the Mi'kmaq, life in the forest or on the coast was an everyday engagement in a world in which *all* their activity took place. The difference between the two worldviews, which either separate or unite nature and culture, is a difference between two ways of approaching nature as a place, viz. between living in it or observing it from a distance. Ingold discerns the following contrast between the two perspectives:

> ... 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.[21]

For Ingold the main point is how people create meaning in the world through engagement and practical activity.[22] There are many Mi'kmaq examples of the "dwelling" perspective and engagement-in-the-world which Ingold describes. One is how the Mi'kmaq divided a year. Life close to nature gave them a sensitivity to the shifting surroundings. Le Clercq's description of how Mi'kmaq in the 17th century talked about a year shows how they engaged

---

[19] Hallowell 1960: 28.

[20] Ingold 1996: 127. Ingold (2000: 5) defines a "dwelling perspective" as a "perspective which situates the practitioner, right from the start, in the context of an active engagement with the constituents of his or her surroundings."

[21] Ingold 1996: 121.

[22] Ingold is in this case influenced by Gibson's (1979) ecological psychology. Ingold writes (2000: 168): "Meanings are not attached by the mind to objects in the world, rather these objects take on their significance – or in Gibson's terms, they afford what they do – by virtue of their incorporation into a characteristic pattern of day-to-day activity. In short, far from being inscribed upon the bedrock of physical reality, meaning is immanent in the relational contexts of people's practical engagement with their lived-in environment."

themselves in the changing landscape and let its transformations be the basis for the classification of months:

> They say that the spring has come when the leaves begin to sprout, when the wild geese appear, when the fawns of the moose attain to a certain size in the bellies of their mothers, and when the seals bear their young. They recognise that it is summer when the salmon run up the rivers, and when the wild geese shed their plumage. They recognise that it is the season of autumn when the waterfowl return from the north to the south. As for the winter, they mark its approach by the time when the cold becomes intense, when the snows are abundant upon the ground, and when the bears retire into the hollows of the trees ... All their months have very expressive names. They begin the year with the Autumn, which they call *Tkours*; this expresses that the rivers begin to freeze, and is properly the month of November. *Bonodemeguiche*, which is that of December, signifies that the Tomcod ascends into the rivers; they catch this fish with the line, making a hole in the ice. And it is the same way with the other months, each of which has its particular designation.[23]

Ingold takes his examples from traditional Cree Indians, in order to show that hunters and gatherers do not approach their environment as a physical world to reflect over. The Cree traditionally did not have a word corresponding to the Western "nature", nor a term for "culture", that would stand for a special sector set aside for human beings.[24] This does not mean that they would experience themselves as *one* with nature, which according to Anderson (1996) is a Western construction, which romanticizes the Indian as a wise "deep ecologist". People, who get most of their food supply directly from nature, have acquired a practical knowledge from it. But the daily hunting and food gathering was not simply a collection of food but an activity tightly interwoven with cultural perspectives and ethical responsibilities towards the environment.[25] Anderson says that religion not only had a function as an ideology suitable to subsistence, but also contributed to an emotional engagement in the activities. But it is a great step from this practical and emotional engage-

---

[23] Le Clercq 1691/1968: 137pp.

[24] Ingold 1996: 135, cf. Hallowell's study of the Ojibwa 1960: 28.

[25] Cf. Sahlins (1985: 154): "All *praxis* is theoretical. It begins always in concepts of the actors and of the objects of their existence, the cultural segmentation's and values of an *a priori* system."

ment to ascribing the Indian a feeling of "being one with nature". This vague metaphor, according to Anderson, has its roots in the rhetoric of the environmental movement and in fact expresses a *distance* from nature, through categories created by urban people who live their lives far from those contexts where every man has to produce his own food or to hunt for living.[26]

Models and human-environmental relations

People's models of their environment also have consequences for their way of treating nature. Ingold thus wants to see the roots of the ecological crises in "the western metaphysics of the alienation of humanity from nature."[27] The anthropologist Nurit Bird-David remarks that the relation between man and nature in Western society often has been discussed within a "subject-object" frame, which implies that nature has become a resource to exploit, use, control, dominate or − lately − be cared for by humanity. In order to contrast with alternative views, she gives examples from hunter-gatherer societies, in which humans and non-humans meet as two subjects who relate to each other in terms of personal bonding.[28] Carolyn Merchant stresses that the mechanical image of nature in modern science opened a way to manipulate the environment and thereby to our ecological crisis today. Donald Hughes contrasts Indian and non-Indian ways of relating to nature and describes how the Indians "loved their land, respected the birds and beasts"[29] as opposed to non-Indians who "felt that they could use any creature in the natural environment without concern for the creature itself or its role in the natural systems."[30] Hughes sees a solution in "Indian wisdom", which will help Westerners to "develop a new style of life, that incorporates care and reverence for nature and understand the limits that must be placed on human actions affecting the natural environment within the context of present knowledge and capabili-

---

[26] Anderson 1996: 66. Anderson (1996: 174) expresses this clearly in his examples from South China, modern Maya, and Northwest Coast Indians: "The common theme of all these traditional resource management ethics is not spiritual harmony with some disembodied and abstracted Nature, but actual *personal and emotional involvement* with the actual landscape and its nonhuman inhabitants" [italics mine]. He sees the notion of "being one with nature" as a dream, created by the green movement and bioregionalists (p. 180), who have little in common with, for example, Northwest Coast Indians.

[27] Ingold 1994: 19.

[28] Bird-David 1993: 121. Bird-David takes her examples among others from Canadian Cree Indians, Australian Aboriginies, !King Bushmen and Nayaka (South India).

[29] Hughes 1983/1996: 106.

[30] Hughes 1983/1996: 105. With "non-Indian" Hughes in this context means the North American colonizers.

ties."[31] Calvin Martin sees a risk that people representing radically different models fail to communicate with each other:

> The usual debate here focuses on whether these people, these Eskimos, should be 'allowed' (by law) to collect these eggs, and to what degree they should be 'allowed' to hunt wildlife. Government biologists and legislators argue with the natives about 'subsistence' and the two sides reach no agreement on the meaning of the word. 'Subsistence,' 'wildlife,' 'wildfowl': the words are wrong. It is significant that there are (or were) in fact no such words in the Yup'ik language, meaning that there is no such reality in the Yup'ik universe. The words refer to objects separate from us, and in doing so they betray a totally different reality from traditional Yup'ik practice.[32]

If many scholars have found the roots of our modern environmental problems in a Western polarization of nature and culture, it seems as though Western ideas about "the Indian way of perceiving nature" (or that of a premodern European) often serve as a positive counter-image (and possible solution) to the Western problems of today. The idea of White people lacking respect for nature is also found among modern Indians. For example, a Passamaquoddy woman says that when Whites see "the pine trees [they] see only matches, toothpicks and toilet paper."[33] Part of the Indian romanticism can be explained as a tendency to contrast views of nature in the Old and the New World. But the "Indian way" seems more to be a construction of what Western society is lacking, than a description on its own premises. As many scholars stress, there has no doubt been a difference between the two cultures, but this difference is more complex than the simple contrast, which is used to explain the modern, environmental crisis.

Two monolithic models?

The above-mentioned scholars provide several interpretations of how the Indian way of perceiving nature differs from the Euro-American. But a problem in these interpretations is that the two types of views are presented as homogeneous systems. A critique of the talk of an Indian way of perceiving nature has been directed towards the word "Indian" itself. Deconstructions of

[31] Hughes 1983/1996: 143.
[32] Martin 1999: 137.
[33] The quotation is from Vescey 1980: 6.

the general category of "Indians" have shown how the concept was initially created by the White culture.[34] This could explain the more careful way in which scholars today talk about an "Indian model". There is now, for instance, a strong resistance against reducing the cultural variety which the first colonizers met into *one* "Indian culture". Vecsey emphasizes that there was a rich variety of cultures, but he also sees deeper connections beyond the differences. To be on the safe side he gives one example of each of his generalizations, predominantly from the Ojibwa.[35] Ingold narrows his discussion how premodern people viewed nature by focusing on the cosmologies of hunters and gatherers. But when it comes to the Western model it is not clear to whom it is attributed. It seems as if Ingold talks about a *perspective* conventionally referred to as Western: "the ontological dualism of that tradition of thought and science which − *as a kind of shorthand* [italics added] − we call 'Western' and of which the dichotomy between nature and culture is the prototypical instance."[36] Jaenen (1987) raises historical objections against speaking of an homogeneous, Western way of viewing nature. He observes how scholars in their zeal to understand the Indian worldview during early colonization tend to contrast it against a European worldview more at home in a modern, technological, and urban world than in the Europe of the 16th century. The Mi'kmaq probably had more in common with the European newcomers than is visible at a first glance.[37] Another objection is that even if the description would fit a documented 16th century, European worldview, it had its origin in a special cultural setting and was converted into texts in rooms distant from the everyday lives of farmers and fishermen. The Mi'kmaq met missionaries, fishermen, and trappers which did not represent a homogeneous, European conception of nature and culture. The fishermen's and trappers' worldview surely expressed another perspective on nature than the educated missionar-

---

[34] A classical deconstruction is by Berkhofer (1978). Daniel Francis (1992) has thoroughly studied how the image of the Indian took shape in Canada. Even to use the word Indian has been widely debated, since it is so tightly connected to a White construction. Many "Indians" of today thus prefer to speak of themselves as Natives.

[35] Vecsey 1980: 1.

[36] Ingold 1996: 117. Ingold is more nuanced in a later work (2000: 6), when he writes "that the Western tradition of thought, closely examined, is as richly various, multivocal, historically changeable and contest-riven as any other."

[37] Jaenen (1987: 55) writes: "Indeed, in many respects, European views of nature, its fauna and flora, and of the 'natural men' who inhabited this New World, may have been closer to Algonkian and Iroquoian views and values of that period than they are to today's generalized views."

ies', yet was never recorded as text, since few among this group of people could read or write.

In an example from modern Cree Indians, Martin lets a friend give voice to Western thoughts. When the friend had worked as a doctor among the Cree, he had noticed how they were disturbed by the delaying snow. When he finally asked why, his informant said that the answer was clear: it was out of care for the small animals that could freeze to death in their small dens if the snow did not come and cover them in a protective coat. What Martin wants to show with this example is how the modern Westerner has become alienated from nature, but for me it says more about a modern (urban?) doctor than about a generalized "Westerner". The same kind of care for wild animals, according to my experience,[38] can be observed throughout the Swedish countryside. Snow and wind are not just abstract, meteorological phenomena or shallow topics of conversation, but something that engages and influences people who live and work in the countryside. During cold and snowy winters many of them send their thoughts to the wild animals and their hardships in finding food.

The "Indian's" (and "Westerner's") ways of viewing nature emerge with greater clarity if contextualized in specific lifeworlds rather than defined by monolithical systems.[39] When different worldviews are discussed, it should be obvious to the reader what time and context the model is referring to. Is it the traditional hunter's or the modern reserve citizen's view? And what does "traditional" stand for? There is a tendency to perceive Indians as peoples without history and with a never-changing philosophy. As the above examples show, there is a difference between the scholar's representation of how other people perceive their environment and how they actually perceive it. To apply polarized concepts like nature and culture when describing the traditional lifeworlds of hunters and gatherers can thus be highly misleading, since the worldview of the group in question is colonized by a model into which it does not fit. A confusion of the two schemes could explain why traditional hunting societies have been romanticized. If the worldview of the hunter is

[38] As I mentioned in my introduction, for fourteen years my husband and I lived on a farm on the Swedish East Coast and worked with sheep ranching.

[39] Hallowell emphasizes already in 1926: 16 the importance of avoiding diffuse categories: "such descriptive categories soon turn into ready made catch-alls, into which customs and attitudes are hastily thrust without a previous study of their integration in the cultural patterns from which they have been taken. Nor is due weight given to the diverse historical background of the cultures from which they come, nor to their appearance at epochs widely separated in time."

interpreted in terms of the Western model of nature (as an antithesis to culture), the former by virtue of its integration of everyday practice, spirituality, and ethics, may give the impression of "oneness with nature" rather than conveying its true complexity. Instead of embedding the "spiritual" evocations of "nature" in a hunter's lifeworld, such confusion of categories transforms them into an abstract idea of nature worship.

An anthropocentric or a biocentric worldview

In the literature on environmental ethics the difference between the Western and the "Indian" view of nature has also been expressed as the difference between an anthropocentric and a biocentric worldview. Once again there is the problem that arguments are juxtaposed without consideration of context. My aim here is to investigate those aspects of Amerindian cosmologies that have led Western scholars to classify them as biocentric. Since this ascription often has been a general statement, unanchored in time and space, I will here limit my discussion to premodern hunters and gatherers. The purpose is to uncover the nature of the ontology, epistemology and ethics that stems from their specific *being-in-the-world* or *dwelling*, and how this has been interpreted by Western scholars, rather than a theoretical discussion of different ethical considerations.[40]

A fundamental feature in an anthropocentric worldview is that humans are granted a unique position in the cosmos. As I have mentioned above, many have regarded Christianity as the source of this so-called Western perspective.[41] Passages from the Bible, such as 1. Gen. 26-28, have been interpreted in terms of a world created for the benefit of humankind. In the Christian, anthropocentric worldview humans emerge as lords of nature (or in a milder version, as stewards of creation). A further source of man-nature dualism was Descartes' belief that only humans had a soul and that animals were to be likened with machines, admirably constructed, but incapable of feeling pain, a

[40] The notion of *being-in-the-world* (Husserl's *Lebenswelt* – lifeworld) refers to ideas developed by phenomenologists such as Heidegger (*Sein und Zeit* 1927) and Merleau-Ponty (1962). As earlier mentioned, *dwelling* refers to Ingold (2000: 5) who emphasizes that ways of acting in the environment are also ways of perceiving it (2000: 9). Ideas in other cultures, that may be bizarre for a Western scientist, could, if put in their original context, make perfectly good sense (2000: 14).

[41] White writes (1967: 1205): "Especially in its Western form Christianity is the most anthropocentric religion the world has seen." J. Baird Callicott (1994) also devotes a chapter to the Christian notion of humans as the center of creation and the implications of this view for human-environmental relations, cf. Vecsey (1980: 34), and Miller (1989: 17pp.).

view which opened the way for terrifying animal experiments.[42] Even if Darwin in the 19th century did away with God as an explanation for the appearance of humans, the thought of humans as lords of nature did not vanish. Instead an evolutionary model was introduced, in which humans were the highest ranked species in nature.

In contrast to Westerners, various indigenous peoples have been ascribed a biocentric view of the world.[43] In their cosmologies a human does not assume a unique position in the universe. Contrary to the anthropocentric worldview, the relation between animals and humans in a biocentric worldview is based on a connection rather than a clear boundary between them. The belief is that both humans and animals exist as "persons" or subjects within the same world and that, as members of this world they have a relationship of mutual dependency.[44] Even the categories "human"/"animal" have been questioned as cultural constructions, with roots in Western tradition.[45] The question "what is an animal?" can thus only be posed by participants in a cultural context, which takes for granted that there is such a category, separate from humans. If in the West, since the time of Darwin, there has been a tendency to biologize humans, there are examples from other peoples who have humanized animals. Animals are seen in the latter case as a way of being humans (or rather "persons"). During his fieldwork in the Amazon, Eduardo Viveiros de Castro observed that a fundamental notion among the indigenous peoples is that "*the original common condition of both humans and animals is not animality, but rather humanity*".[46] The thought is expressed in narrative form, where all animals once were humans and did not until later attain their present form.[47]

---

[42] Worster 1977/1996: 62.

[43] The notion of the Indian as biocentric is abundantly verified in scholarly literature, e.g. Callicott 1994, Hughes 1983/1996 and Anderson 1996. It is also represented in popular literature, e.g. Suzuki & Knudtson (1992). Callicott uses the concept *ecocentric ethic* and sees a convergence between modern science and an indigenous worldview (1994: 10p.): "An ecocentric environmental ethic conforms not only to the evolutionary, ecological, physical, and cosmological foundations of the evolving postmodern scientific worldview … but also to most indigenous and traditional environmental ethics", cf. Merchant (1992: 64). Hughes (1983/1996: 81) speaks about an *ecological ethics*: "The ethics taught by the Indian elders in sacred tradition is an ecological ethics, stressing respect for living things, forbidden needless destruction, and prohibiting waste of the food they have provided." Suzuki & Knudtson (1992: 18p.) prefer to label Native worldviews as a *sacred ecology*. "For it looks upon the totality of patterns and relationships at play in the universe as utterly precious, irreplaceable, and worthy of the most profound human veneration."

[44] Cf. Anderson 1996: 69pp, Callicott 1994: 131 pp., Hughes 1983/1996: 14pp., and Vecsey (1980: 11pp).

[45] Ingold ed. (1988) *What Is an Animal*?, cf. Bouissac's (1989) review of Ingold's book in the article "What is a human?".

[46] Viveiros de Castro 1999: 2.

[47] Hultkrantz 1981: 156, Martin 1978: 34, Harrod 2000.

The animals were assumed to have been created together with humans and in a similar form:

> Animals had the ability to shed their coats of fur and appear as human beings, just as some human beings learned the art of assuming animal form. In fact, animals were seen as beings who put on their animal forms much as a person might don a mask or costume. At the creation, these beings had each chosen a specific animal form, according to their own temperaments and preferences.[48]

The relation between humans and animals is thus not characterized by hierarchical order, as in the doctrines of Darwin, but by partnership. An animal mask evokes common qualities that humans and animals share and in different ways express, not that the animal is metaphorically ascribed a uniquely human property. "Only a fool would imagine himself as somehow exclusively a *human* being."[49] The tendency to attribute human qualities to animals have made Viveiros de Castro label the Amerindian ontology "multinaturalistic", in order to contrast it with a modern, "multiculturalistic" ontology. The latter is, according to him, grounded in the idea of an existing unity in nature but a variety of different cultures. The unity in nature has its origin in the bodily form of everything existent. The Amerindian idea, on the contrary, is grounded in the assumption of a spiritual unity, underlying a bodily diversity. Beyond the different bodily forms there is a unity in spirit and meaning.[50] To perceive animals as persons was, however, not an idea that led the traditional hunter to dissolve the physical difference between him and the animals:

> … the Amerindians do not *spontaneously* see animals and other non-humans as persons; the personhood or subjectivity of the latter is considered to be a *non-evident* aspect of them. It is necessary to *know how* to personify non-humans, because it is necessary to personify them *in order to know*.[51]

It is important to understand that the expressed kinship between living beings was not founded in a general love of animals. The bond between hunter and

---

[48] Hughes 1983/1996: 23.
[49] Martin 1992: 18.
[50] Viveiros de Castro 1999: 4.
[51] Viveiros de Castro 1999: 7.

animal was tied to specific species.[52] A person with a romanticized image of the Indian as a predecessor to animal rights activists would be truly disappointed upon actual contact. Åke Hultkrantz describes how badly the Shoshoni treated their dogs and even how they without hesitation could run over them if they were on the road.[53] It was common for the Mi'kmaq to eat dogs in the 17th century, but nowhere in the early literature is there an indication that the bones from the eaten dogs were treated with the same respect as for example beaver bones.

Animals as persons

The phenomenological approach to human-environmental relations recognizes that a person's worldview derives above all from his or her being-in-the-world.[54] The tendency in a hunter cosmologies not to demarcate a category of "Nature" can be explained by suggesting that, contrary to urban people, the traditional Indian lived and acted *in* the place that the former are distanced from and reflect *upon.* Calvin Martin argues in a similar way regarding why the traditional Indian way of perceiving the world he inhabits differs from a Westerner's view of nature:

> ... these people traditionally lived in a world dramatically different from the one we perceive, products as we are of the Judeo-Christian, rationalistic, empirical, scientific tradition. The Indian was a participant-observer of Nature, whereas we in the Western cultural tradition tend to be voyeurs. We keep our distance from Nature; we plunge into it enveloped by an arsenal of protective paraphernalia or admire it through a picture frame or scrutinize it

[52] Martin 1992: 54; 1999: 57; cf. Hultkrantz 1981: 142. Furthermore, some animals that were of importance for a people's subsistence could be targets of "worship" in a culture (e.g. buffalo), while corresponding animals (beaver, seal) in other cultures did not receive the same treatment at all (Hallowell 1926: 17). This is yet another indication that cultural attitudes toward animals must be studied separately and not reduced to generalizations. The correlation between "worship" and subsistence value of an animal is thus not a general regularity, which can be applied to all Native peoples.

[53] Hultkrantz 1981: 124.

[54] Anderson (1996: 72) discusses how people's subsistence could affect their idea of the environment: "We may expect to find that traditional subsistence-oriented cultures will encode a tremendous amount of intensely emotional and personal material about animals and plants, and that this material is highly structured and organized into a simple, memorable worldview that is dramatically highlighted in myth and ritual." Cf. Ingold (1996), and Martin (1992, 1999).

> through a microscope lens − antiseptically, removed from the Power of it all.[55]

Martin's observation can be criticized since he does not clarify to which Indian and which Westerner he refers, but if by Indian is meant a premodern hunter, his knowledge about the forest with its plants and animals was a result of an everyday engagement. Since it is in the forest or by the shore that everyday work is done, knowledge of nature is as important as knowing the people one shares one's daily life with.[56] The personal engagement of a hunter-gatherer in the world extends the care further than to his or her own species, which is reflected in what he or she experiences as a *person*.[57]

"Person" is defined in the *Oxford Dictionary* as "an individual human being".[58] According to the Western, anthropocentric model, humans are not only the lords of creation; it is only humans who can be persons. But in the biocentric worldview, the concept of person is broadened. While what the anthropologist commonly calls "personhood" tends to coincide with "humanness", personhood in the biocentric model is not something that should be "added" to an organism in order to humanize it. It is a standard for all life, a built-in potential in all living beings, which can take the form of a human, a deer or an infinite number of different existences.[59] In the Cree language the word for person is "he lives".[60] Animals and plants do not *resemble* persons, they *are* persons.[61] The inner, vital part is permanent, but the

---

[55] Martin 1987: 28.

[56] Bird-David 1992a: 30; 1992b: 39.

[57] Kearney (1984) elaborates the concept "the Self and the Other", which he sees as the primary counterparts in a worldview. If there is an awareness of being separated from the surroundings (the Other), there is at the same time an awareness of a relation between the Self and the Other. How this relation is constituted differs between cultures (p. 68).

[58] (*The Concise) Oxford Dictionary* 1990: 888.

[59] Among the Lakota, for instance, animals, plants and minerals are part of *wakan tanka* and personify this "Great Mystery" by having life and consciousness (Callicott 1994: 123).

[60] Ingold 1996: 134.

[61] Hughes 1983/1996: 80, Whitehead 1988: 4pp, Anderson 1996: 167, Ingold 1996: 131, Martin 1999: 56. Martin expresses this animal/human relation more radically in a later work (1999: 57): "Boundaries between human and animal quite simply did not exist." This is a statement that may be modified. Although Amerindian hunters' cosmologies did not, as in Western tradition, dichotomize nature and culture, this does not mean they did not recognize a difference between humans and animals. Viveiros de Castro talks about animals having an inner human aspect, but this would not mean that animals were human. I think it is better to talk about personhood as the common essence of both animals and humans. A human is a human, a beaver a beaver, but they are both persons. In stories the difference between a beaver and a human must be ex-

outward appearance can change. Humanness is one of many shapes a person can have.[62] Viveiros de Castro sees here an important structural difference between Western and Amerindian cosmologies:

> The internal form is the soul or spirit of the animal: an intentionality or subjectivity formally identical to human consciousness. So if we conceive of humans as somehow composed of a cultural 'clothing' that hides and controls an essentially animal nature, Amazonians would have it the other way around: animals have a human, socio-cultural inner aspect which is 'disguised' by an ostensibly bestial bodily form.[63]

A common conception among many Amerindian groups is that the bodily form of every species is only a disguise, which hides an inner, human aspect. On the Northwest coast there are many examples of the notion of bodily disguises. Salmon, for example, are persons who take on their fish hides to sacrifice themselves as food to their human relatives. Mi'kmaq stories, like other Native stories, tell us about a mythical time when the boundary between animals and humans was diffuse:

> In old times ... in the beginning of things, men were as animals and animals as men; how this was, no one knows. But it is told that all were at first men, and as they gave themselves up to this and that desire, and to naught else, they became beasts. But before this came to pass, they could change to one or the other form; yet even as men there was always something which showed what they were.[64]

The Mi'kmaq culture hero, Kluskap[65], appears in the myths as an anthropomorphic being who can relate to a whale as his "grandfather". "Grandmother" is the old woman who takes care of Kluskap's *wigwam*, but she is also ad-

---

pressed in terms of this common essence, rather than as in Western tradition, through polarized concepts like animals and human, nature and culture.

[62] According to Hallowell (1960) Ojibwa experience personhood as a main category, of which human person, animal person and Wind person are examples; cf. Hallowell 1926: 7. The animals "were *persons* who had purposes, will, language, and power" (Harrod 2000: 145, footnote 1).

[63] Viveiros de Castro 1999: 3.

[64] Leland 1884: 31.

[65] The spelling varies: Glooskap (Leland 1884), Glooscap (Rand 1894/1971), Kulóskap (Leland & Prince 1902), Gluskap (Speck 1915, Parsons 1925, Wallis & Wallis 1955), Gloskap (Michelson 1925), Kluskap (Whitehead 1988).

dressed as Mooinaskw (Mrs. Bear).[66] In Mi'kmaq stories humans and animals may marry. A girl can thus marry a loon.[67] But the texts also tell us that the relation between animals and humans was not unproblematic. The Mi'kmaq's relation to the beaver is one example. The 17th century missionary Le Clercq used to spend long periods in the forests with the Mi'kmaq, partly to learn their language, partly to better succeed in his missionary work. He is one of the early writers who discusses Mi'kmaq views on animals. According to him, Mi'kmaq said the beaver had sense, lived in cabins as humans and as them formed separate nations.[68] But they also explained to him that they would not have been hunting the animal, if it only would tell them whether it was their enemy or friend. Although there were similarities there were thus also differences, but these should be explained within a more unitary model, rather than in a model that dichotomized nature/culture or human/animal.

That the dissolution of the boundary between animals and humans was not total, is illustrated by a story about a man who marries a female beaver. When the man has lived with his beaver wife for a year, his relatives arrange a beaver hunt, which tragically kills the wife, and restores the man to the human world.[69] The ties between human relatives are in the end stronger than between humans and animals. The story could be read as a commentary on human consanguinity and affinity. Humans and animals, like humans vis-à-vis other humans, can be united in affinal alliances, but the ultimate solidarity (and loyalty) lies in the blood relationship. Thus the relatives of the husband (humans/consanguines) wins over the wife's relatives (animals/affines) But there is an advantage with marriages. In the human world important economical and political alliances are created, in the transcendental human/animal marriage man gains knowledge about the world of the animals. When the man comes to the home of his wife's beaver family he sees a parallel to the world of humans. Even beavers have a mother and a father, brothers and sisters. They live in "two-storied" houses and have to work hard in the autumn to store winter food. One important part of the work is to cut down trees and build hiding places for "the great danger"[70] which threatened the group. When

[66] Rand 1894/1971: 270.
[67] Rand 1894/1971: 378.
[68] Le Clercq 1691/1968: 277.
[69] Michelson 1925: 33-35.
[70] "The great danger" is of course to be read as the human beaver hunt. The beaver was hunted all the year around by the Mi'kmaq, but according to Lescarbot (1609/1928: 271pp.) it was easiest to catch the animal in wintertime. One Mi'kmaq made a hole in the ice, close to the beaver's hut, while another Mi'kmaq stabbed a cane at the ice to bring the frightened beaver back to its hut. When the beaver fled back, the hunter sat

formerly the man had been hunting, he had only had his own relatives' view on the prey, but through his marriage he will from now on also share his partner's (the prey's) view, a kind of double perspective which implies an empathic feeling between humans and game.[71]

Another example of the double perspective can be found in a story from the Labrador Peninsula.[72] A young man marries a caribou woman. By living in the woman's family the man learns that even caribou are persons and have families. From now on he can experience the hunting from both a prey and a hunter perspective. As a hunter he sees a caribou that runs away, is shot down, falls to the ground and dies. But as a member of a caribou family he sees a person in a coat, who is shot down, takes off the coat and continues to flee.

Not just animals, but plants, mountains, rocks, and winds are treated as persons in Amerindian stories. The Haida Indians spoke about the South Wind as an old man who blew storms at the coast.[73] The Mi'kmaq had the notion of Coolpujot, the man without legs, who caused the change in weather.[74] The Ojibwa also talk about the winds as being "living". They were born of a common mother and they had a home (the four directions).[75] Although not looked upon as humans, they were persons and thus had anthropomorphic features, something that is amplified in the myths. The Thunder Birds are another example of personifications of natural phenomena. According to Hallowell "thunder" and "bird" have the same linguistic root in the Ojibwa language. Hallowell does not think this is a coincidence. The Thunder Birds were classified together with hawks, which were to be found in Ojibwa territory. Modern meteorological studies have shown that thunder corresponds

---

prepared beside the hole he had made and could easily catch the animal. In summertime the easiest way to catch beavers was to break their dams. When the beaver hut was laid bare the animals were shot with arrows during their confusion, not knowing where to go (Denys 1672/1908: 22).

[71] Ingold wants to distinguish two ways of understanding stories (2000: 24pp). One way concerns the hunter's skill as an agent − how to track animals and tell where they are. The other way concerns the hunting expeditions and should, according to Ingold, be treated more as a performance − a "sentient ecology" − that should not be treated as an alternative to Western science, but more like a "poetic of dwelling". Ingold writes (2000: 25): "It is knowledge not of a formal, authorised kind, transmissible in contexts outside those of its practical application. On the contrary, it is based on feeling, consisting of skills, sensitivities and orientations that have developed through long experience of conducting one's life in a particular environment."

[72] The example is from Harrod (2000: 73pp.), who has borrowed it from Tanner (1979: 136pp); cf. Levi-Strauss (1962/1971: 47).

[73] Anderson 1996: 57.

[74] Rand 1894/1971: 234.

[75] Hallowell 1960: 29pp.

with the bird's pattern of movement. The hawks and the Thunder Birds stay in their "nests" at the same time. In the myths Thunder Birds are depicted as persons: they hunt, talk and dance. They have the same social life and kinship terminology as the Ojibwa. According to Hallowell, however, it is not because they are associated with humans or birds that the Thunder Birds are conceptualized as "persons". Says Hallowell: "The conceptualization in myth and belief of Thunder Birds as animated beings who, while maintaining their identity, may change their outward appearance and exhibit either an avian or human form exemplifies an attribute of "persons" which, although unarticulated abstractly, is basic in the cognitive orientation of the Ojibwa."[76]

What is considered animated and endowed with personhood is reflected in language. The Algonkins distinguish between animate and inanimate nouns. If we judge by our Western way of dichotomizing living beings/dead matter, the Algonkin division might seem arbitrary. The division is also difficult for a Native to explain, since it appears automatically in their speech, as do the grammatical rules we use without reflection in our daily conversation. A stone can be spoken about by an Ojibwa as animated, but when an old man was asked if all stones are animated, he answered: "No! But *some* are!"[77] Stones are not automatically animated because they can be found in this category, but depending on if they on special occasions have been proven to accommodate power.[78] They can, for example, move in a ritual:

> Whereas we should never expect a stone to manifest animate properties of any kind under any circumstances, the Ojibwa recognize, *a priori*, potentialities for animation in certain classes of objects under certain circumstances ... The stone was treated *as if* it were a 'person', not a 'thing', without inferring that objects of this class are, for the Ojibwa, necessarily conceptualized as persons.[79]

Power might also disappear, as when Hallowell found that stones, which earlier had been supposed powerful, had lost this quality. The key to under-

---

[76] Hallowell 1960: 31.

[77] Hallowell 1960: 24.

[78] Cf. Ingold 2000: 97: "[T]he liveliness of stone emerges in the context of their close involvement with certain persons, and relatively powerful ones ... whether a stone is alive or not will depend upon the context in which it is placed and experienced."

[79] Hallowell 1960: 25pp.

standing why things are treated as living ("persons") among the Ojibwa, is thus to be found in their ontology.[80]

By taking a local lifeworld as point of departure it is possible to understand how a biocentric worldview is generated. The practical engagement in the world is fundamental to the cultural models that are created about this world. Practical experience (e.g. of hunting caribou or beavers), generates an emotional engagement with the environment, which includes plants and animals. If humans do not assign themselves a special position in nature, the relation between them and the rest of nature will be as equal as other social relations; a woman sees blood-ties between her and the plant she is cultivating, a hunter approaches the prey as an affine and shamans can look upon animal and plant spirits as allies or enemies.[81] To be animated is the same as being looked upon as a subject with self-consciousness, personal identity, autonomy, and will. No less than a human, an animal can understand its surroundings, which is why a hunter will address it when hunting.[82] Considering the ontology that classifies animals as persons, the behavior of the hunter becomes understandable. Anderson (1996) has focused his study on the Native Americans of the Northwest Coast. Their worldview can be explained from their specific being-in-the-world, which differs greatly from the romanticized images of the "Indian". It is only for "modern, urban people" that an animal can be "the Other" and the target of a special kind of romanticism, says Anderson. For a Northwest Coast Indian an unknown man could be more of a stranger than an octopus or a wolf. The social and personal construction of Self is not only negotiated in relation to humans. Anderson writes: "The beings of the wild take on the function of validating what really matters to us – what we 'really are' – just as God does for devout Christians, just as Science does for devout academic rationalists, and just as one's family, friends, and psychotherapist do for ordinary Americans."[83]

Hunting – a "holy occupation"

In Western society hunting has traditionally been perceived simply as a way for people to get food or make a profit, or as often in modern times, merely as

[80] Hallowell 1960: 43pp.

[81] Viveiros de Castro 1999: 3.

[82] Cf. Hallowell's study (1926: 53pp.) of bear ceremonialism, which shows that in many cultures the hunter spoke to the bear during the hunt. Penobscot used to call to the bear in the den to come out by saying: "Bear, I've found you, so come out" (p. 53, note 193).

[83] Anderson 1996: 71.

leisure. The hunter's strategy and skill are what captures the prey. But an ontological equality between human and animal presupposes two subjective perspectives during a hunt: the hunter's and the prey's. We might, as Westerners, be impressed by a premodern hunter's technical skill, but a hunter in these societies has another way of looking at the hunt that goes further than practical knowledge.[84] The animal is here also a subject (person) and is hence granted a perspective of its own.[85] This is why hunting must take as its point of departure a dialogue between the hunter and the prey. The animal responds to the signals from humans, and hunting becomes a communication between two living beings, in which one takes and the other gives life. Within this framework the shaman has a crucial role in a successful hunt. Hunting in such contexts has been described as a "holy occupation", which requires ritual.[86] The cultural interpretation of hunting was not separate from practice, but was more important for the outcome than the technique itself. The shaman was the most important "hunter", even if he was not physically a part of the expedition. Lescarbot describes how a Mi'kmaq prepared for his hunting in the 17th century: "[T]hey go with their bow in hand and the quiver on their backs, that way that their Aoutmoin hath showed them (for we have said heretofore that they consult with the oracle when they are a-hungry) or somewhere else, where they think they shall not lose their time and labour."[87]

Shamanism is according to Viveiros de Castro "the capacity evinced by certain humans deliberately to cross ontological boundaries and adopt the perspective of non-human subjectivities, in order to administer the relations between humans and non-humans."[88] The strength of the shaman is in his ability to transcend borders, to be capable of being "species androgynous". The ability to see animals "as they really are" is a quality that laymen lack or should avoid. If a layman sees an animal in human form, there is a danger that

---

[84] Ingold 1986: 245; cf. Hallowell 1926: 10.

[85] Viveiros de Castro (1999) gives examples of how the animal's perspective is the same as humans, while their *positions* differ. Thus "jaguars see blood as manioc beer, vultures see the maggots in rotten meat as grilled fish" (p. 4), "what we see as a muddy waterhole, the tapirs see as a great ceremonial house ... "(p. 10). Maybe Viveiros de Castro's use of "perspective" in this case is a bit misleading. I would rather speak of a common point of departure for all beings or organisms in the world (e.g. looking for food), but a different perspective in terms of how to respond to what the environment may offer (i.e., what kind of food to prefer).

[86] Hughes 1983/1996: 25, Vecsey 1980: 41. The quotation is taken from Speck's (1938/1939: 260) description of hunting as: "not war upon the animals, not a slaughter for food and profit, but a *holy occupation*". Cf. Ingold (1986: 245), Hallowell (1926: 10): "Success or failure in the hunt is more likely to be interpreted in magico-religious terms than in those of a mechanical order."

[87] Lescarbot 1609/1928: 270.

[88] Viveiros de Castro 1999: 6.

he will become an animal himself or die. Some animals possess extra power and are thus more dangerous to meet, like the river otter on the Northwest Coast (among the Haida, Tlingit, and Tsimshian).[89] The otter could appear in human form and pretend that he was a friend of the one he meets. If humans were enticed to believe in the friendship, they could be transformed into otters. To become a shaman required, as an important part of the initiation, to go out alone to meet an otter and challenge it. If the shaman was strong enough, the animal was defeated and the tongue cut loose and dried, recognized as a powerful object to be kept in the medicine bundle.[90]

The epistemological ideal of the shaman differs from the Western tradition. In the latter case knowledge is a way to objectify and to eliminate or separate the observer's subjectivity in the acquisition of knowledge. Amerindian shamanism has an opposite ideal. To gain knowledge is to try to capture the perspective of the "object".[91] An object is here an incompletely interpreted subject. Viveiros de Castro provides us with a new way of discussing the concept of animism[92], where the goal is not to "reduce intentionality to zero in order to get a perfectly objective picture of the world", but to reveal "a maximum of intentionality, or the abduction of a maximum of agency ... "[93]

The perception of animals as subjects (persons) implies that animals possess magical or suprahuman qualities that need be considered in order to conduct a successful hunt. Before the hunt it was very important for the shaman to negotiate with the counterpart among the animals, the "owner of the animals".[94] Hultkrantz defines the owner of the animals (animal guardian) as a "supernatural ruler whose function is to exercise stewardship over the wild animals, especially the animals that are hunted by man. He protects these animals, sees to it that if they have been slain by man, they get a correct ritual burial, and sanctions or prevents the hunter's slaying of them."[95] The notion of a leader among the animals, who was a necessary counterpart in the dialogue with human society, is found in many indigenous groups all over

---

[89] Anderson 1996: 58.
[90] Anderson 1996: 60.
[91] Viveiros de Castro 1999: 6.
[92] Viveiros de Castro defines animism (1999: 20pp.) as "an ontology which postulates the social character of relations between humans and non-humans: the space between nature and society is in itself social." Naturalism is its antithesis: "relations between society and nature/culture are themselves natural ... Animism has 'society' as the unmarked pole, naturalism has 'nature' ... " (p. 21p).
[93] Viveiros de Castro 1999: 7.
[94] Also known as "Master of the animals", "Lord of the animals" or "Keepers of the game" (Martin 1978).
[95] Hultkrantz 1981: 136.

America.[96] The owner of the animals supervised the supply of food and only granted the hunter his prey as long as he carefully followed hunting and food taboos. Since the essence of animals and humans was the same (they were both persons), the hunting rites were of great importance and even the treatment of the carcass and the bones was surrounded with taboos.[97]

Premodern Mi'kmaq – biocentrics or capitalists?

The above discussion has shown that what might be interpreted as a biocentric ethic emanates from an ontology where every living thing is potentially a person, a subject with a perspective of its own. Within this worldview even non-humans have rights, wishes, demands, and discontents. The reciprocity between humans and animals was conceived of as an agreement between partners, which prevented a human from taking more than he or she needed.[98] Yet the Mi'kmaq participated in a mass slaughter of fur-bearing animals, especially beaver.[99] But the discussion as to whether they were biocentrics or capitalistic fur hunters must be put in its right context. Some authors (e.g. Leland) have contributed to the romantic image of Indians as environmentalists. In today's society there are tendencies to construct a romantic biocentric model as the only hope there is for humans to find an alternative way of relating to nature and thereby saving it from destruction. But the attribution of a biocentric worldview to premodern hunters must be grounded in their particular way of perceiving the world, rather than evoke a timeless, general model of relating to nature. Otherwise it runs the risk of only being a constructed, romanticized model. Taking an ethical standpoint vis-à-vis animals today is not the same as subscribing to an ontology that results in a respectful relation to them.

The ethical choices made by a premodern hunter are more understandable if we look at this person's lifeworld. Ingold stresses that environmental conservation among premodern hunters follow from how they interpret the world:

> Over and over again we encounter the idea that the environment, far from being seen as a passive container for resources which are there in abundance for the taking, is saturated with personal powers of one kind or another. It is *alive* … In many societies, this is ex-

[96] Hultkrantz 1961, 1967; Martin 1978.
[97] Martin 1978: 77.
[98] Vecsey 1980: 20.
[99] Martin 1978.

> pressed by the idea that people have to *look after* or *care for* the country in which they live, by ensuring that proper relationships are maintained.[100]

The interplay between hunters and their environment is founded on dialogue and engagement, rather than exploitation:

> It is through a direct engagement with the constituents of the environment, not through a detached, hands-off approach, that hunters and gatherers look after it. Indeed, caring for the environment is like caring for people: it requires a deep, personal and affectionate involvement, an involvement not just of mind or body, but of one's entire, undivided being.[101]

When the premodern Mi'kmaq hunter acquired knowledge of the world it was not by using a scientific method, where the main task is to distance oneself from the subject so as to minimize subjective interpretations. Knowledge, for the hunter, was of a relational character and came out of daily practice:

> [T]o 'know someone is to be in a position to approach him directly with a fair expectation of the likely response, to be familiar with that person's past history and sensible to his tasks, moods and idiosyncrasies. You get to know other human persons by sharing with them … And if you are a hunter, you get to know animals by hunting.[102]

To gain knowledge through subjectifying rather than objectifying meant an engagement in the environment, where an ethical standpoint has grown out of a subject's meeting with other subjects.[103] The view of the world as a subject (inhabited by persons) thus automatically implied an ethic of responsibility and respect. In the West, on the other hand, the task of the human subject was more often to distance him- or herself from the studied object, which meant that ethical considerations were set aside from the pursuit of knowledge. The

---

[100] Ingold 1994: 9.

[101] Ingold 1994: 11.

[102] Ingold 1994: 15-16; cf. Viveiros de Castro 1999: 7.

[103] Cf. Harrod (2000: 122): "Native American predecessors did not portray the natural world as a separate object of concern, and they did not make the distinction between nature and culture that informs much contemporary thought."

tendency to subjectify (relate to) instead of objectify (detach from) the world seems to be one of the sources of the romantic notion of the premodern Indian as "one with nature". But to be able to take the animal's point of view is not the same as becoming the animal or merging with nature. His empathetic feelings notwithstanding, the hunter should use his knowledge to catch his prey.

In the Mi'kmaq case, the historical material shows a rupture in their traditional ethic when it is challenged by the European interest in furs. The earliest descriptions of how the Mi'kmaq perceived the environment are from the 17th century and are fragments in texts by missionaries and other explorers. There are, in the missionary literature, descriptions of how the Mi'kmaq prevent their dogs from eating certain animal bones, since this could influence their future hunting luck. It was not allowed to burn or throw away bones.[104] Father Le Caron writes in 1624 that bones from beavers and moose demanded special care. They should be saved or thrown into a river. The belief was that the souls of the animals could see how the carcasses had been treated and pass this information on to both living and dead animals. If people failed in their treatment of the prey, other animals could refuse to be caught. Le Clercq describes how the beaver spirit could warn the living beavers, who then would leave their huts, so that they would not meet the same fate. Even bones from other animals received this special treatment:

> They never burned, further, the bones of the fawn of the moose, nor the carcass of the martens; and they also take much precaution against giving the same to the dogs; for they would not be able any longer to capture any of these animals in hunting if the spirits of the martens and of the fawns of the moose were to inform their own kind of the bad treatment they had received among the Indians.[105]

The early missionary stories, however, tell us about changes in the life patterns among the Mi'kmaq and their neighbors. According to Denys, the Mi'kmaq did not take more from nature than they needed.[106] But Denys writes how the treatment of the animal bones changed.[107] He observes that the Mi'kmaq even stopped putting beaver pelts in the graves. The reason for the

---

[104] Denys 1672/1908: 22p.
[105] Le Clercq 1691/1968: 226, cf. Ingold's Cree study (1994: 9).
[106] Denys 1672/1908: 20.
[107] Denys 1672/1908: 32.

latter change was the demand for the new merchandise from Europe, which was paid for in pelts and animal hides.[108] The European products could not, like the traditional, be found in nature. Up until now, the forest had given the Mi'kmaq all they needed, but it could not give them guns and kettles. They neither understood nor had any control over the market system that they were forced into. Prestige in the traditional society was established and maintained by redistributing furs, not by keeping them.[109] For the Mi'kmaq it was also an enigma to see prices go up and down, which meant that on one occasion a lesser amount of goods was offered for the same amount of pelts, causing a lot of irritation among them. But the furs were what the Mi'kmaq had to offer and the hunting escalated. A missionary tells us that during an ordinary year as many as 12,000 to 15,000 beaver furs could be shipped to France and during an extraordinary year as many as 22,000![110]

The contradiction between Nicholas Denys' assertion that the Mi'kmaq in the 17th century did not take more from nature than they needed, and their contribution to a mass slaughter on furbearing animals, has puzzled scholars. The image of the biocentric nature lover seems not to be congruent with the actual circumstances. In *Keepers of the Game* Calvin Martin tries to explain this paradox by a closer study of Algonkin cosmology: "up to this point we have been witness to the empirical, objective, physical – or 'operational' environment model of the observer: what we lack is the 'cognized' (emic) model of the Micmac."[111] Martin sees the origin of the unrestricted beaver hunt as a Mi'kmaq response to the fact that so many of them died in the 16th century. According to Martin, hunting implied a contract between the hunter and his prey. The hunter was obliged to pay respect to his prey, otherwise the animals could refuse to give up their lives and even send diseases to humans. When the Europeans came, they brought deadly diseases and some of them were spread with animals as hosts, e.g. tularemia. The Mi'kmaq would then have accused the animals of being the cause of their illness and partly, according to Martin, they were right.[112] Most Mi'kmaq did not even have to meet the Europeans to contact diseases, since they spread rapidly with the

[108] Ibid: "They are also cured of other little superstitions which they had, such as giving the bones to the Dogs…"
[109] Miller 1989: 10.
[110] *Jesuit Relations* 1959, IV: 207.
[111] Martin 1978: 32.
[112] Martin 1978: 142. According to Lescarbot, rats were unknown to the Mi'kmaq before arriving with the French ships to rapidly multiply in the province (ibid.). Martin thinks that they could have caused the spreading of typhus and plague. Fleas from rats might also have been spread to rodents.

animals. The Mi'kmaq and other Algonkin tribes thought that the animals had started a war against them, their former allies, and thus the previous taboos pertaining to hunting were not valid any more.[113] Through the success of Christianity and an anxiety over the rapid changes, the formerly sensitive relation to the animals became shallower. The fur hunt could be explained, according to Martin, as revenge on the disease-carrying animals.

According to Martin, European technology was also incompatible with indigenous spirituality. To accept Western material culture also meant to accept the European ideology that was associated with it. It was impossible to conceptualize and support the use of new, European merchandise in terms of older beliefs in the master of the animals: "Western technology made more 'sense' if it was accompanied by Western religion."[114] Like Martin, Vecsey (1980) examines why the Mi'kmaq and other Native groups took part in the extermination of furbearing animals. He would not, as Martin, explain the devastating hunt as a result of the Mi'kmaq abandoning their cosmology. The economic pressure from the colonists certainly influenced the Algonkins' environmental ethics, but this does not mean that they disappeared completely. The Indians who participated in the hunting could not resist the colonial pressure and sometimes they had to give up their ideals to survive.[115] To get hold of the desirable White merchandise (e.g. guns) was important and for this pelts were needed as barter.

The image of a biocentric nature lover partly colors the reasoning in the above mentioned examples: in Martin's explanation the Algonkins abandoned their premodern traditional ethic and in Vescey's description it still persisted, but was played down for the sake of survival when people were drawn into the European trade. Two other scholars who also have tried to understand why the Indians participated in a commoditized hunt, are Shepard Krech and Eugene Anderson. Krech starts by questioning the assumption that Indians were conservationists and ecologists.[116] This notion often seems to have been quickly adopted rather than critically analyzed. In the historical sources there are indications of both a conservationist ethic and a more wasteful attitude. In his texts from the 17th century, Denys writes that the Mi'kmaq did not take more than they needed[117] but also that they did not care to save some beavers

[113] Martin 1978: 146.
[114] Martin 1993: 63.
[115] Vecsey 1980: 28.
[116] Krech 1999: 212.
[117] Denys 1672/1908: 20.

in a hut for reproduction purposes: "Few in a house are saved; they would take all. The disposition of the Indians is not to spare the little ones any more than the big ones. They killed all of each kind of animal that there was when they could capture it."[118] Krech does not question that in one sense Indian knowledge was "ecological"[119], but emphasizes that it was not what a modern Westerner means by the concept:

> Their ecologies were premised on theories of animal behavior and animal population dynamics unfamiliar to Western science, beginning, for some, with the belief in reincarnation … Their actions, while perfectly reasonable in light of their beliefs and larger goals, were not necessarily rational according to the premises of Western ecological conservation.[120]

Krech says that a more explicit conservationism among Natives did not develop until after the European arrival, when the animals were overhunted. What we see today among Natives and recognize as something akin to Western game management practices was generated, according to Krech, through contacts with Jesuits, the Hudson Bay Company, and anthropologists like Speck, and can be traced to the decline and commoditization of beaver.

Like Vecsey, Anderson (1996) views the implications of the fur trade in a larger context than just the Algonkin cosmology. He suggests that those who romanticize "primitive" people for their close bond to and worship of their land often conflate two things: a worldview/religion which represents the environment and a practical moral code which actually preserves the environment.[121] Even if many traditional societies have notions about the importance of preserving the land, this does not prevent them from being driven to break the moral code. The incentive for the mass slaughter of animals was the European demand for pelts and a market system, which penetrated the lifeworlds of all but the most isolated hunting bands. What started as modest barter developed into an escalating pursuit of pelts, where the pelts them-

---

[118] Denys 1672/1908: 24.

[119] Krech (1999: 24) writes: "When speaking of Native Americans as ecologists, we do not necessarily mean that they used mathematical or hypothetico-deductive techniques, but we should mean that they have understood and thought about the environment and its interrelating components in systemic ways … When we speak of them as environmentalists, we presumably mean showing concern for the state of the environment and perhaps acting on that concern."

[120] Krech 1999: 212.

[121] Anderson 1996: 203 footnote 11.

selves were only a visible expression of more radical changes that the Algonkins had to confront: epidemics, competition with trappers and other Indian groups over game, new and desirable European merchandise (e.g. guns and kettles), new status relations, and new wars.

One example of changing status relations is how French merchants early on undermined the leadership and group authorities among the Mi'kmaq. The Frenchmen decided what person would be responsible for the trade relations, but the chosen one did not always happen to be the traditional leader, who was not even always at hand at the time when the French ships arrived. As the importance of trade increased, the status of those with whom the French negotiated their trade grew, and many new individuals advanced to key positions in this way.[122] Furthermore, a new category of Mi'kmaq was brought up, namely children from mixed marriages. Some of them were sons of merchants, who had married Mi'kmaq women. The children grew up at trading posts, but spent much time traveling in the province to visit their relatives. As adults they could become *capitaines des sauvage*, popular trading partners, since they spoke two languages and possessed local knowledge and social connections. When the French governor began to yearly distribute presents to the Indians, it was the "capitaines" who were responsible for the distribution, which they conducted in the name of the French king. This had as a consequence that the *metis* could become more important than the traditional leaders.[123] The trade also supported the mission in many ways. For instance, converted Indians received benefits in the colony; they were, for example, the first to be given weapons and ammunition. In many cases the mission began when the missionary introduced himself to the band council, was adopted by the band, and promised to make it easier to trade with France, if he was permitted to freely preach Christianity.[124] Denys' description of an Indian from Acadie who visited France shows that the new merchandise was highly valued and combined with prestige for its owner. The Indian strolls along a street in Paris, where many coppersmiths were working. He then asks his French companions if these working men were relatives to the king and the mightiest men in the country.[125]

---

[122] Upton 1979: 19.
[123] Upton 1979: 27.
[124] Jaenen 1976: 67p.
[125] Denys 1672/1995: 53pp. This note is taken from another edition of Denys' text compiled by Ian Maxwell, Nova Scotia: The Little Daisy Press.

Besides scanty information in early historical sources from the 17th century about Mi'kmaq cosmology, there is another problem in the texts that were presented at the end of the 19th century as records of Mi'kmaq oral tradition. During this period, and in the spirit of Romanticism, an interest had arisen in the exotic. When Leland recorded Algonkin oral traditions, he simultaneously created an image of the Indian that goes well together with the age in which he lived. The nature child, integrated with the land, would well fit in with later theories about the Indian as biocentric. But the image of 19th century Algonkins had little in common with their actual life. When Leland collected his material most of the Mi'kmaq and their neighbors lived on reserves and on the margins of the colonial economy. They supported themselves as lumber-jacks, sawmill workers, and basket makers or took other temporary jobs. A popular and profitable business was to work as guides for hunting expeditions. Leland's belief that Indians had a special, deep feeling for nature was embraced by other White people, but was e.g. not a hallmark of his contemporary Algonkin friend and informant Gabe Acquin. He was of high rank among the local bands, but also moved with elegance between his own and the English culture. At least twice he had visited England, where he was received as a celebrated guest in well-off homes and even in the royal family. He was a skilled hunter and boasted about having shot 60 deer in two weeks.[126] Another Indian, Joe Polis, was guide to the nature philosopher Thoreau and had once shot 10 moose in a day.[127] The Passamaquoddy tents, which Leland visited in order to write down some of his stories, were placed close to a big hotel on Campobello Island, so as to be near the profitable tourist business. The examples of Aquin and Polis do not outrule that there were Indians who had an intimate and harmonious relation to their environments, but they modify the stereotype image of the Indian created by Leland and other Romanticists.

Parkhill (1997) asserts that Indians are not intrinsically closer to nature than their White neighbors are. He sees the image of the "original environmentalist" as a construction that may be a burden for modern Mi'kmaq and other Natives who want to discuss environmental issues from the perspective of their position as modern, educated Canadian reserve citizens with a history of their own. Those who do not follow the stereotype could be looked upon as "traitors" when they prefer a modern house instead of a *wigwam* and watching

[126] Parkhill 1997: 47 and 81.
[127] Parkhill 1997: 81.

TV instead of ritual dancing.[128] Native authors could be expected to speak of nature instead of agendas of their own choice, and they could be met with disappointment when they visit White schools in modern clothes. The discrepancy between the image of the Indian that Whites cherish and the modern traditionalist, could also block constructive solutions to political and economical problems. People expect them to be "the White man's Indian"; they accept some good rhetoric in delicate matters but do not want them to stir up too much actual controversy. If the discussions further involve conflicts of interest implying threats to hegemonic society, the legitimacy of the "Indian's" true engagement could be brought into question.[129]

Modern lifeworlds and biocentric ideals

Writing about how a Mi'kmaq hunter viewed nature in the 17th century is like laying a jigsaw puzzle, where some important pieces are missing. When Viveiros de Castro speaks about an Amerindian way of viewing nature, he bases his observation on fieldwork in Amazonia, among groups that for generations have been in contact with modern society. Although well aware of the importance of looking at the context for every group, scholars might let modern fieldwork among hunters spread some light over the fragments we find in historical texts about hunting societies, e.g. the Mi'kmaq. In the Mi'kmaq's case there is, of course, a crucial difference between cosmologies in the 17th century and the 1990s and it is very problematic to consider both the cosmology of a premodern hunter and a modern reserve citizen in terms of the same concept – biocentric. This general notion – the "biocentric" − seems to be created out of an ideal regarding how people should live on earth in order to prevent it from being destroyed. A hunter society's complex interplay with the environment is reduced to some few images: Earth is in its essence spirit; every living being possesses power and should thus be treated with respect; to nurture a holistic perspective on humans and nature is more sustainable, and so on. Merchant (1992) uses the concept ecocentric ethic instead of biocentric ethic. She points to Aldo Leopold as the one who first formulated this ethic in "The Land Ethic", the final chapter in *A Sand County Almanac* (1949). According to Leopold, the individual has ethical obligations and bonds not only to other individuals and to society, but also to the land itself.

---

[128] Parkhill 1997: 84.

[129] J. Clifford (1988) discusses this topic in *The Predicament of Culture*. The chapter on identity in Mashpee shows in a concrete way how a constructive solution of land issues is prevented because of the White culture's images of an "Indian essence".

Animals, plants, water and earth have an intrinsic value and should not be treated like objects. The scientific discipline of ecology also plays an important part within a particular branch of ecocentrism, the "eco-scientific". Knowledge about how an ecosystem works should be combined with an ethic that transcends the scientific demand of being value free and allows humans to take a stand for a world where every living being is protected.[130] Another important movement within the ecocentric ethic is the "eco-religious". In this category Merchant includes "American Indian, Buddhism, Spiritual Feminists, Spiritual Green, Process philosophers".[131] Common to these belief systems are: "Faith that all living and nonliving things have value. Duty to whole environment. Human and cosmic survival".[132] They share with the eco-scientific branch the organic (holistic) way of thinking, which means acknowledging that:

1. Everything is connected to everything else
2. The whole is greater than the sum of the parts
3. Knowledge is context-dependent
4. The primacy of process over parts
5. The unity of humans and nonhuman nature[133]

Merchant's ecocentric ethics may be read as a list of postulates more typical of our time (and with roots in the environmental movement of the 1970s), rather than a close, contextual analysis of such complex categories as "American Indian" and "Buddhism". This does not mean that models like Merchant's could not be important sources of inspiration for modern Natives, Buddhists or Westerners with a strong interest in alternative ways of fighting for a cleaner Earth. Hultkrantz reports from the 1980s that although a lot of the North American traditional lifeworlds are gone, the younger generation has a growing interest in ecological issues and a wish to reclaim their ancestors' way of treating nature.[134] When the Mi'kmaq's environmental interest increased during the 1980s, their speeches assimilated much of contemporary

[130] Merchant (1992: 64) says that Aldo Leopold, Rachel Carson, and deep ecologists are examples of eco-scientific thinkers.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Ibid.
[133] Ibid.
[134] Hultkrantz 1981: 134.

science and images of “Indian wisdom”, but it is also important to note how they anchored their ideas in their modern lifeworlds on the reserves.

The ethics of lived-in worlds may in practice collide with ethics emanating from theoretical models, even if the ambition is the same, e.g. to care for nature. The decline in bear population in the Yukon-Kuskokwim area prompted biologists to initiate a project in which they, with the help of a radio transmitter, could monitor the condition of the animals. The transmitter was attached to the bear after it had been put to sleep with the help of a tranquilizer gun. The Yup’ik Eskimos wanted to stop the project and succeeded. The biologists could not understand why the Yupiit were opposed to a project with the best of intentions. The Yupiit explained that they saw this way of treating the animals as “play”, and that the bears could be harmed during the project. Some men referred to an earlier project involving the caribou. They had found a caribou that was badly tormented by a wrongly placed radio transmitter. The animal was fighting to breathe and was shot in compassion, since the men did not think it would have survived.[135] What for the scientists was an effective method to count animals via technical instruments, for the Yupiit was an inhuman way to treat animals, ultimately because the daily encounter with animals involved relating to them more as sentient subjects than as objects on a screen. The example illustrates the complex relation between scholarly models and lived life.

The Indian and the place

Let us now focus on the image of the “Indian” as having deep connections with the land. Is this image only a Western construction of scholars and nature romanticists? Has it, as a counter-point to European society, consciously or unconsciously been a way for the Europeans to make more distinct what they have seen as failures in their own civilization?

A Romantic prehistory

Attributing to the Indian a character that the constructor himself or herself sees as desirable has its historical explanation. Francis examines this in *The Imaginary Indian*, noting how, when the industrial revolution showed its unpleasant sides, the Canadian began to look upon cities as polluted, crime-

[135] Martin 1999: 109.

generating and overcrowded.[136] Industrial work was experienced as monotonous and enslaving. The idea arose that the Indian character might have something to teach the Europeans about freedom, health and a way of living in harmony with nature. There were even cases where White people pretended that they were Indians so as to strengthen their environmental mission. For these nature romanticists, a life close to nature was transformed into an abstract dream about an unproblematic existence. When nature was no longer seen as a threatening antithesis to civilization, but instead as carrying the potential to heal humans, this influenced the way of looking at the "Indian", since the Indian was considered to be closer to nature than the culture-bound Westerner. A positive re-evaluation of nature thus also meant a positive re-evaluation of the Indian.

Parkhill (1977) discusses why Westerners have ascribed to the Indians the feature of being place-bound. He focuses on the image that connects Indians to place (landscape/nature), to find out what needs the Indian stereotype is trying to satisfy in White society (which he prefers to call hegemonic society). According to Parkhill the "Indian" has been depicted as someone who has deep bonds to nature, never changes, and is thus in modern society doomed to either extermination or assimilation. The "Indian" is so different from the hegemonic society that there is an unbridgeable rift between *them* and *us*. The stereotype picture has been cemented in popular literature, but Parkhill also finds this image among scholars. One of the first collections of oral tradition among Mi'kmaq and other Algonkin groups was compiled by Charles Leland, and Parkhill thus chooses to study his personality and authorship closely. He wants to uncover what needs belong to the author himself, what derives from his time, and how Leland had let his writings be shaped by these needs.

Leland lived in the city but as a child spent a lot of time in the New England countryside. Late in the 19th century, rapid urbanization caused a growth of slums and unhealthy environments. Leland was disturbed by this. He was influenced early on by Fichte, Schelling, and other German Romanticists and spent a long time in Germany, mostly in Heidelberg and Munich. He was especially interested in the Romanticist's theory of folklore, which they saw as reflecting a deep connection between a people and the place they inhabited. The poetry of the *Volk*, according to this tradition, had sprung from those who lived closest to nature and represented the deeper bonds between nation, community, and land. Influenced by the German Romanticists, Leland

[136] Francis 1992: 123.

had the ambition to transfer these European ideas into his own context. If the Hudson River did not seem as mythical as the Rhine, it could be because the colonizers did not know the history of its people.[137] For Leland Indians were like the German *Volk*. By tapping the indigenous people of the mystic secrets of the land, the new American nation could adopt a *Volk*-soul of its own, based on a deep connection to places such as the German Romanticists had found in their European homeland. Indian legends became the source of the New World's own poetry of the *Volk*. Leland's mission was to be a mediator between the Indians, who were close to nature and threatened by extinction, and the successful conquerors who had transcended the bond to nature.[138] He thought that a poet like Wordsworth could not deeply enough reveal the secrets of the land. Since he was a newcomer the poet did not have, as did the Indians, a part in the collective soul of the land. Leland himself emphasizes how much the Algonkin stories might have enriched his experiences of the landscape if he had had access to them during his happy childhood in the New England countryside:

> Now that it is indeed possible from these poems and such tales as have begun to reappear to see the forms of olden time once more, I venture to express the hope that all who love nature in New England will turn to the study of its folk-lore and thereby secure the final flash of gold on the mountain tops, the last touch in the picture, of which I have spoken. When I was a boy my happiest hours were spent in the rural scenery of Massachusetts. Could I have had such books then, I could have enjoyed it all far more.[139]

Leland's wish to create a history of the place for himself and his fellow countrymen is shown by how he treats his sources, sometimes a bit incautiously and sometimes deliberately making additions and changes. The Algonkin legends, he felt, could satisfy a longing among the Americans to find unity in a land that had been severely damaged by the Civil War. The new nation needed to be spiritually anchored in the geographical space that is occupied. The historian Daniel Francis says that a strong incentive behind some Canadians' desire to transform themselves into "Indians" has been that they have not

---

[137] Parkhill 1997: 91.
[138] Parkhill 1997: 102.
[139] Leland & Prince 1902: 18.

felt at home, since the land originally did not belong to them.[140] The British-born Archie Belaney's transformation into Grey Owl is one example of this. Another way to solve the conflict was to transform the new landscape into a copy of the old, familiar one and then assimilate the Indians to this. Both cases, assimilating the indigenous groups or "going Native" themselves, involve questions of power. The language of power is obvious in the politics of assimilation but more subtle and sophisticated in the latter case:

> Each time they respond to a sales pitch which features an Indian image, each time they chant an Indian slogan from their box seats, each time they dress up in feathers for a costume party or take pride in the unveiling of yet another totem pole as a symbol of their country, non-Native Canadians are trying in a way to become indigenous people themselves and to resolve their lingering sense of not belonging where they need to belong. By appropriating elements of Native Culture, non-Natives have tried to establish a relationship with the country that pre-dates their arrival and validates their occupation of the land.[141]

The Indian – the first deep ecologist?

When Parkhill examines the image of the Indian as connected to land and upholder of an ecological wisdom, his main interest is how scholarly and popular literature have created this image. According to the environmental philosopher J. Baird Callicott the image gained a stronghold among environmental activists and hippies in the 1970s, who saw the American Indian as their "guru", who would teach them to be more careful with the Earth we live on. A classic example of how images of the wise Indian were created, is a widely spread speech by the Dwamish Chief Seattle, who lived in the 19th century. Seattle is said to have delivered the speech at the signing of the Point Elliott Treaty in 1855. But his words were not written down until 25 years later by a doctor, Henry Smith, who claimed that he had been there. It is obvious that Smith has edited the speech, but it is not this speech that has become famous and quoted. The "Seattle Speech" that spread in the 1970s and carries a strong environmental message was written by Ted Perry, a professor in English literature at the University of Texas. This speech was a commissioned

[140] Francis 1992: 223, cf. Reid 1995.
[141] Francis 1992: 190.

work for a television series about pollution in America. It is thus not surprising, Callicott writes, that "critics of the current environmental mystique surrounding American Indians have suspected that the Indian's status as custodian of a special land wisdom is neo-Romantic nonsense with an environmental spin."[142]

A modern environmental philosophy that has often been equated with an "Indian view of nature" is deep ecology.[143] The father of deep ecology is Arne Naess, who coined the concept in 1972.[144] Naess says Vedanta has inspired him, but other well-known Indian leaders, like Black Elk and Luther Standing Bear, have in other contexts been used as inspirational sources. For deep ecologists experiences of place and nature are important. Besides concerning human beings and society, human solidarity and identification should be widened to embrace animals, plants, natural landscapes and ultimately our planet.[145] Adherents of this movement often refer to ecological research (e.g. the web of life) and seek to deprive humans of the central role they have assigned themselves in the universe. Deep ecologists sometimes use hunter and gatherer societies as prototypes of sustainable societies, far from modern industrial society's waste of the Earth's resources. The biocentric worldview and identification with place have been the hallmarks that deep ecologists have been ascribing to traditional Native societies. There are, of course, modern reserve inhabitants who in different ways have been in contact with deep ecologists and their ideas. Some of them have been attracted by these ideas and adopted them. But it is important to note the difference between these ideas and traditional Amerindian cosmology.

First of all reserve life and the history of different Native groups have had a great impact on how modern Indian movements formulate the meaning of place. Many spokesmen have strongly criticized the White man not only for taking their land but also for trying to be an "Indian" by capitalizing on their culture. "To be an Indian you have to walk in my moccasins" is an expression sometimes directed at New Age people or other modern movements, whose members are incorporating the words of Native leaders into their recipes for individual salvation. Many Native leaders disapprove of the fact that the reserves have been a kind of spiritual "gas stations" for Whites, who spend a short stay there to heal themselves, without giving a thought to the social

---

[142] Callicott 1994: 130.
[143] Merchant 1992: 88.
[144] Arne Naess 1972, cf. Merchant 1992: 85.
[145] Gottlieb 1996: 522pp.

problems that are also a part of reserve life, such as difficult economic conditions, racism and drug abuse.

Secondly, many scholars stress that there has never been a homogeneous view of nature among the different Native groups.[146] North America has a rich variety of cultures, in which specific ways of experiencing the environment must be embedded in each society's conditions rather than used as examples of an all-embracing worship of nature. Deep ecology, on the contrary, has as its utmost goal and object of identification an abstract "Nature" even if local places may be a point of departure. It seems as if through history the Indians have not been conservationists in a consistent way. They have taken care of those parts of nature that they have been attached to and wasted other parts.[147] A more general, aesthetic esteem of nature seems to have been a development within Western civilization, where philosophers like Rousseau and Thoreau have contributed with important inspiration.[148] When a Seneca visited Professor Hultkrantz in Sweden, the scholar was struck by the fact that this man did not seem at all impressed by the beautiful, Swedish spring. When asked, the Seneca Indian "defended" himself by saying that the White man meditates and looks at nature in a more general way, while he himself is dependent on his local context.[149] When Haida Indians protest against clearcutting it is not primarily a general interest in environmental issues that motivates them, but the meaning of the local place for their identity. If the forest disappears, so do the memories and history of the group. The meanings of memories of places are also obvious when the Shoshoni selected those mountains that were said to be inhabited by spirits. It was not the most grandiose mountains that were chosen, but the mountain passes, which people visited and went to for visions.[150]

An environmental ethic cannot, of course, be found in either the Mi'kmaq's or some other Native group's genetic code. But there is no way of

---

[146] Hultkrantz 1981: 119. Vecsey (1980: 25) writes: "Their concern for the earth was not vague and undifferentiated. Their taxonomic systems were empirical, and their attachments were particular locations, particular aspects of their environment." Cf. Hughes (1983/1996: 10, 58): "Indians loved nature, not in any romantic sentimental way but with an honest, respectful love born of daily contact ... Their relationship was not to nature in the abstract, but to a particular region and to localities within that region." Martin (1992: 54) observes: "Hunters cultivated a relationship with individual plants and animals, not with *nature* − an important point." Cf. Gill 1982.

[147] Hultkrantz 1981: xxiv.

[148] Hultkrantz 1981: 125.

[149] Ibid.

[150] Hultkrantz 1981: 123.

ignoring the fact that historical documents, missionaries' stories, or contemporary ethnographic texts give glimpses of a close Native attachment to places and an ethic of caring. These glimpses can not simply be dismissed as concealed romanticism, or obvious constructions by Western authors, or images created to satisfy the wishes of the reader.[151] Parkhill's analysis of Leland and his Algonkin legends shows a man who is constructing a lifeworld from an idea. It is a wish of Leland himself rather than an accurate representation of the actual conditions for the portrayed group. He lived his life far from the daily life of the Mi'kmaq. The all-embracing environmental ethic constructed by deep ecologists is also far removed from life on a reserve. When Ingold (1996) explores the phenomenology of place among hunters and gatherers, he is emphasizing a knowledge of the world created through engagement (dwelling) *in* a special environment. In using this perspective we do not need the notion that Indians in a hunter culture should have a unique position as regards "reading nature". Ingold says that hunters and gatherers, like all humans, from the very beginning are involved in "an active, practical and perceptual engagement with constituents of the dwelt-in world. This ontology of dwelling, I contend, provides us with a better way of coming to grips with the nature of human existence ..."[152]

In using concepts like dwelling or being-in-the-world we might understand both how modern reserve inhabitants and premodern hunters engage themselves in their landscapes. The Indian is not a unique, place-bound biocentricist. If the foundations of his existence are changed, so are also his perspectives on the world. The reserve has with time become a home for the Mi'kmaq, and it is not a traditional hunting society that they are struggling for today. They share the interest in hunting and fishing with their White neighbors and this interest no longer implies a life in the forest but a day's work. The right to land is still a controversial question, but there is nothing to suggest that a Mi'kmaq from Eskasoni feels closer to his place than a White worker from Sydney. But once there was a difference between the two cultures' ways of viewing landscapes, which was grounded in what Ingold calls "ontology of dwelling". This difference would later on have consequences for nature and ecology in the New World and lead to a replacement and mar-

---

[151] Anderson (1996: 56): "The argument ... is not that traditional peoples are natural conservationists, but that they *sometimes* conserve, and that, when they do, it is because of religiously coded moral rules as well as (or instead of) rational planning."

[152] Ingold 1996: 121.

ginalization for one of the groups.[153] The Mi'kmaq's modern struggle to save Kelly's Mountain and their traditions have a prehistory that is important to know, so as not to get lost in visions that equate Indians with modern deep ecologists, saving sacred places. The Mi'kmaq's relation to their place is a more complex story concerning how they lost it, both physically and culturally, and their fight to once again become a part of those decisions that concern the place they inhabit.

To read a landscape: The Garden of Eden or the Devil's Wilderness

The interpretation and practical construction of a landscape is highly dependent on culture. In the texts of 17th century missionaries, New France is depicted as God's punishment. Biard saw a terrifying wilderness meeting the newcomers and starts his Relation by saying that Satan must have arranged this place. The Christian mission became thus not only to spread the teachings of God, but also to create a Garden of Eden in the new country. The cultivated landscape was a symbol of God's order ordained in Creation and reproduced by the human effort to recreate the heavenly order on Earth. By tilling new land and sowing it with European plants the colonizers could restore the lost paradise. To banish the wilderness, Biard thought, would also be to banish Satan and his demons.[154]

Biard experienced Nova Scotia as a place where people had to struggle hard for their daily bread.[155] The first French people who stayed in Port Royal during winter would not have survived if the Mi'kmaq had not provided them with food. Starvation became so severe that some of them had to stay in Mi'kmaq families during winter to survive. With this in mind, it is fully un-

[153] Cronon (1983), in *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England,* has studied how the shift from Indian to European dominance in New England brought great changes to the landscape. The restructuring of the landscape also meant that the ecological conditions for traditional subsistence for different Native groups were broken down. Cf. Carolyn Merchant (1989).

[154] *Jesuit Relations* 1959, III: 35, cf. Vecsey 1980: 33.

[155] Calvin Martin (1992: 48pp.) has noted how the Europeans' statements about starvation among hunters, and their struggle for daily food, tells us more about the colonizers than about the actual conditions of the hunters. There seems to be a cultural myth concerning hunting cultures and starvation that is grounded in the radical difference between the hunters' consumption of food (what they ate and how much) and the European way of treating food. The Mi'kmaq ate intestines, bone marrow and whole, boiled fish, something the colonizers regarded as inedible or barbaric, but measured in nutritive value is not unfit to eat. They also had "eat all feasts", when they consumed enormous amounts of food, and then fasted for some days, a practice alien to Westerners. The latter ate moderately with the result that they had a hard time to keep pace with the Mi'kmaq when they did not have access to food for several days. The days of fasting, which they experienced as starvation, were not experienced as such by the Mi'kmaq. Cf. Sahlins (1972), who even labels hunter-and-gatherer society as the "original affluent society".

derstandable that the utterly exhausted French felt the untouched landscape as a threat. But in Biard's and other missionaries' notes the reader can find indications that for the Mi'kmaq, the place was far from chaotic. It seems as if the Mi'kmaq had organized the land into well-defined units. Biard writes that it was the responsibility of chiefs to divide the province into different territories, each with a local leader. Often the divisions coincided with natural boundaries such as a bay or a river. For example, there was one chief for Pentegoet River and another for St. Croix.[156] The division of land was one of the important tasks for the summer councils.

Le Clercq confirms the division of land, but says that this was done when the Mi'kmaq gathered for councils in the spring or autumn. Perhaps the most important divisions were made in summertime, since Le Clercq's description more seems to concern the local chief's allocation of hunting and fishing rights to individual Mi'kmaq. Harsh punishments followed if someone broke these agreements.[157] The Mi'kmaq used to mark the most important hunting and fishing places with a cross and Le Clercq is surprised at how systematically these signs were put out in the landscape.[158] He is also the first missionary who describes how skilled the Mi'kmaq were at drawing maps. With meticulous precision and an intimate knowledge of places they drew on birch bark the exact outlines of different areas.[159] Denys confirms Biard's observations. When a man had killed some game it was usually the women's work to carry it home. Denys is surprised at how the men so skillfully could estimate the distance to the killed animal and what trees, rivers, or other features the women would have to pass in order to find the game.[160]

Rand also confirms the detailed knowledge that the Mi'kmaq possessed about the province. In spending all their time in nature they had achieved a solid knowledge of animals and trees, edible plants and roots. Rand especially emphasizes the knowledge they had about landscape:

> Show him a map of these places, and explain to him that it is 'a picture of the country,' and although it may be the first time he has ever seen a map, he can go round it, and point out the different places with the utmost care. He is acquainted with every spot; he is

---

[156] *Jesuit Relations* 1959, III: 89.
[157] Le Clercq 1691/1968: 235, 237.
[158] Le Clercq 1691/1968: 151.
[159] Le Clercq 1691/1698: 136.
[160] Denys 1672/1908: 4.

> in the habit of making rude drawings of places for the direction of others. One party can thus inform another at what spot in the woods they are to be found. At the place where they turn off the main road a piece of bark is left, with the contemplated route sketched upon it. The party following examine the *luskun*, as they term it, when they come up, and then follow on without any difficulty.[161]

Speck mentions that birch-bark maps were still in use at the end of the 19th century.[162] One of his informants tells us about how a sixty-year-old chief during a trial referred to a birch-bark map to claim his right to a certain territory. The tradition to divide the land was still in use in 1914, when Speck was mapping family hunting territories in Nova Scotia and on Newfoundland. The districts in Nova Scotia were transferred from father to son and if there were no sons the allotments were given to somebody else. As in the time of Le Clercq and Biard, it was the band chief who controlled the distribution.[163]

For those who inhabit a place, however, a landscape is not just a physical environment that could be captured in a map. Humans load their everyday-world with meanings that are generated from their way of being-in-the-world.[164] In his study of the phenomenology of place, the geographer Edward Relph makes an important distinction between how an insider and outsider relate to a place.[165] An insider relation is characterized by belonging and feeling at home in a place, and by the development of an I-Thou-relation to it.[166] The outsider feeling may vary from a tourist's contemplation, to the geographer's documentation or the exploiter's interest in profit. The outsider generally experiences an I-It relation, an objectification of the place. It is not

---

[161] Rand 1894/1971: xl, cf. Wallis & Wallis 1955: 55.
[162] Speck 1922: 98.
[163] Speck 1922: 92.
[164] Evernden 1985.
[165] Relph 1976.
[166] Relph's concepts of existential insideness/outsideness could be compared with Martin Buber's concepts I-It/I-Thou-relation in *I and Thou* (1923/1994). Buber gives one example that starts with "I consider a tree"(1923/1994: 19). From a glance one might view it as a beautiful picture, or determine the species, or just talk about it, but in all cases the tree is only an object. This way of viewing the tree Buber characterizes as an I-It-relation. But there is another experience of the world that humans might enter, a Thou-relation. Since Buber was a devoted Jew, he puts a religious dimension in the relation: "It can, however, also come about, if I have both will and grace, that in considering the tree I become bound up in relation to it. The tree is now longer *It*. I have been seized by the power of exclusiveness … The tree is no impression, no play of my imagination, no value depending on my mood; but it is bodied over against me and has to do with me, as with it – only in a different way." (1923/1994: 20). "It [The world] is not outside you, it stirs in the depth of you ..."(p. 49).

the physical geography that interests the locally embedded individual, but the existential geography, the semiotic whole where cultural interpretations and personal experiences of the landscape have melted together into a meaningful pattern.

For the Europeans the New World was an alien landscape, an empty paper waiting to be given its contours by the cartographer. It was important to transcend the alienation and the discontinuity of this new place in order to infuse the unknown with the familiar. One way of banishing alienation and maintaining the experience of continuity was to recreate familiar, European landscapes in the New World. The leaders in the 18th century English colony thus had their houses built after models in their home country. The Anglican Church in Fredericton was built as a copy of Portland Chapel in London. The colonial cartographers tried as systematically as possible to create a sense of being home and to conjure an imagined British community in the new colony by deliberately avoiding to represent the "strange", that is everything that was beyond the British settlement. The first map to show Halifax, drawn in 1749, was widely circulated in England and showed an English ship in the harbor, a fortress, a palisade, a church, army barracks, the governor's residence and a court house. Behind the city's palisade were depicted two fruit trees, a beetle, and a porcupine. The forests and the animals were excluded and the presence of an aboriginal group with hunting and fishing grounds in the area was not hinted at.[167] The British colonialists thus had transformed Mi'kmaq culture into a part of the wilderness. If the Mi'kmaq were mentioned, it was as children of the forests replete with the features of wild nature: inhospitable and fierce. In building a new Britain, the British had themselves sealed off from the Mi'kmaq and from North American nature. It became their strategy of feeling at home in their new country.

For the Mi'kmaq, it was the insider perspective that dominated their relation to the land. There is much to suggest that they talked about the landscape as if they were surrounded by a living being. According to Father Pacifique they associated the land with a giant who had his head on Cape Breton and his feet at Yarmouth and Gaspé.[168] That could be one reason why Gaspé was called "land's end", that is the place where the giant's feet end. The wilderness that cartographers tried to transform into a land to their liking was the Mi'kmaq's home, and it was only through hard pressure from the colonizers

[167] Reid 1995: 32 pp.
[168] Le Clercq 1691/1968: 63.

that the Mi'kmaq were finally forced to leave the "wilderness" and be settled on reserves. Countless times throughout history the missionaries complain over the difficulties to baptize the heathens, since they refused to abandon their nomadic lives. An early example of this is found in Le Clercq. He wrote that the French may think that life in the forest only offered simple and miserable conditions, but that the Mi'kmaq in fact appreciated their camps more than French houses. To leave the forest for them was the same as abandoning their home. A Mi'kmaq who had grown tired of hearing colonizers telling him to abandon his own traditions was strongly critical against the attempts to assimilate his people to the White world:

> 'I am greatly astonished that the French have so little cleverness, as they seem to exhibit in the matter of which thou hast just told me on their behalf, in the effort to persuade us to convert our poles, our bark, and our wigwams into houses of stone and of wood which are tall and lofty, according to their account, as these trees. Very well! But why now,' continued he, 'do men of five to six feet in height need houses which are sixty to eighty? For, in fact, as thou knowest very well thyself, Patriarch − do we not find in our own all the convenience and the advantages that you have with yours, such as reposing, drinking, sleeping, eating, and amusing ourselves with our friends when we wish? This is not all,' said he, addressing himself to one of our captains, 'my brother, hast thou as much ingenuity and cleverness as the Indians, who carry their houses and their wigwam with them so that they may lodge wherever they please, independently of any seignior whatsoever? Thou art not as bold nor as stout as we, because when thou goest on a voyage thou canst not carry upon thy shoulders thy buildings and thy edifices. Therefore it is necessary that thou preparest as many lodgings as thou makest of residence, or else thou lodgest in a hired house which does not belong to thee. As for us, we find ourselves secure from all these inconveniences, and we can always say, more truly than you, that we are at home everywhere, because we set up our wigwams with ease wheresoever we go, and without asking permission of anybody.'[169]

The speaker goes on by criticizing those French who despise the Mi'kmaq life. He thinks his people have been wrongly characterized. He strongly rejects the notion that they lack religion, traditions, honor, and an organized

[169] Le Clercq 1691/1968: 103pp.

society, and that they live more like animals in the forest, without bread, wine, and other products of which the French said that they had an abundance. But, he continues, the French cannot fully understand the feelings that a Mi'kmaq has for his country, which means that they are fully content with the life they live. If France was like a celestial paradise, why then would the French leave their country and risk their lives to visit a strange and barbaric country in the West? Everything that makes life worth living – wives, children, relatives and friends – they leave behind them. They do not even manage to cope in the new country but must either eat a monotonous diet like cod or ask the Mi'kmaq to hunt for them. If a Mi'kmaq appears to be short of anything, the reason is that he has adopted the French lifestyle. The speaker asserts that the one who lives the longest and best life among the Mi'kmaq is the one who holds on to their traditional customs and is fully content with eating beaver and moose meat, seabirds, and fish. He is a thousand times more happy with his life in the forest and his *wigwam* than if he stayed in the most grandiose palace and ate with the mightiest princes in the world.

There was thus an obvious difference between the lifeworlds of Mi'kmaq hunters and European farmers. Central for the European farmer was the settlement, where generations before him had left traces in the form of other buildings, cleared fields, or household utensils. When he was confronted with Mi'kmaq life, he found it hard to understand what it was that gave the Mi'kmaq a feeling of home, since their daily life seemed to involve a constant change of places. But the nomadic life did not for the Mi'kmaq mean that they simply moved around in the forests or along the shorelines. They had names for the places they returned to, and many of these names were lost during colonization and thereby ceased to be "places". Some Mi'kmaq names that were included in English and French maps were also given to "wrong" places that had no connection with the place that they originally emanated from.[170] Since it was the conquerors that drew the official maps, it is the colonizers' memories that we find on today's maps. Acadia became New Scotland (Nova Scotia), Captain Cornwallis had a river named after him, and a settler named Kelly gave his name to a mountain on Cape Breton. The same landscape was thus "read" in different ways by different travelers. The settler surely knew that Kelly's Mountain concealed a deep cave, but it remained a cave like any other. For the Mi'kmaq the cave was the most important feature of the mountain, since it was *Kluskap's* cave, where, according to local sto-

[170] Hewitt 1908: 3.

ries, the culture hero had his dwelling place. The tourist that looks at the stone formations, carved by wind and water outside Kelly's mountain, does not need much imagination to see that one of the stones looks like a woman's face, but probably sees it just as a chance resemblance. Mi'kmaq children were taught through the stories that it was Kluskap's "Grandmother" and surely felt a pleasant sense of recognition next time they passed the stone. They may also have felt frightened when the Atlantic storms threw cascades of water on the giant face or into the cave, where Kluskap, according to the Elders, had disappeared and might one day return. When the loon cried its desolate screams the children knew from the stories that the bird missed his master. And they could never be quite sure, when they heard the voice of a howling dog in the night, that it was not Kluskap's petrified dogs who had come alive again, running through the landscape with their returned master.[171]

The promised land or the lost land?

The British victory over the French would have long-standing political consequences for the Mi'kmaq, who had to watch as their allies were forced to leave the province. The English then began a hard campaign to politically assimilate the Mi'kmaq. The latter answered with armed resistance against the new colonists, but after hard suffering they were forced to surrender and make peace with their enemies in 1763. The Mi'kmaq faced a tough political defeat, but by allying themselves closer with Catholicism they could at least win a "freedom of the soul" and resist the English attempts to anglicanize them. When the English had defeated the French it gave them supremacy in the coastal provinces and this opened the door for those of their countrymen who wanted to settle down there. Halifax was founded in 1749 and after the American War of Independence it became one of England's most important Atlantic harbors. When the loyalists in New England had lost the war many of them chose to move to Nova Scotia, and within a year after 1782 its population had doubled three times to 42,000.[172] Mission and trade had seriously challenged Mi'kmaq traditional life, but the new English settlements and a

[171] Speck (1935: 9) gives examples of how the Penebscot Indians read Kluskap out of the landscape. When they found a stone that looked like a face they might say: "It looks like Gluskabe, I guess he left his picture on it". Nor was it unusual that they commented on landscape in the same way: "Naturally all such places on the river or bay shore or on the mountain sides suggesting the human profile, and they are by no means uncommon in the rocky country, have the same thing said about them. Or they say it is the likeness of some local shaman" (ibid.).

[172] Upton 1979: 78.

growing industrialization constituted an even greater threat against the Mi'kmaq's chances to continue to live their nomadic life as hunters and gatherers.

The tillage of land and growth of industries in the 19th century did not only introduce a new mode of production in the coastal province but also made an impact on the landscape and its ecology. Nova Scotia was to be transformed from "wilderness" to a cultivated landscape, "the Garden of Eden". The rapid remoulding of the landscape caused a radical change in traditional Mi'kmaq life since they lived in the middle of these changing conditions. They were shut out from important hunting and fishing grounds. Two of their most important prey, beaver and moose, were close to extermination. Sawmills polluted the water and agriculture changed both flora and fauna. In Europe the poor had to leave the countryside for work in factories or they had to emigrate to the "Promised Land". The Mi'kmaq did not have the same possibilities as the English proletariat. The jobs in the city were mostly meant for the Europeans. Historical documents bear witness to how the conditions for the Mi'kmaq deteriorated. Poverty and starvation became an everyday experience. The uprising against the British had given way to resignation. The English authorities saw a solution to the Mi'kmaq problem in creating reserves. By distributing allotments, the English hoped to see to it that the savage would be civilized, get settled, and have opportunities to contribute to the new nation. A proposal as to how the reserves should be organized was drawn up in 1820 and was meant to be a solution to the "Indian problem".[173] For the Native people, the land was not promised but lost.

It is in the aftermath of this turbulent time that Rand and Leland started to collect Mi'kmaq oral tradition. The stories can be seen as a Mi'kmaq way to integrate the political, economic, and cultural changes that they had gone through and what it meant for them to have become resident settlers. Kluskap, the central figure, in the early stories represented Mi'kmaq traditional life. He lived in the forests or along the coast, traveled by rivers in his canoe and generously invited people to huge feasts in his *wigwam*. Reports from the 1870s show that the belief in Kluskap at that time was still strong, even if the Mi'kmaq were said to be Catholics: "Their belief in him is strong even at the present time, and many grave discussions are held among them on the question 'Who was Glooscap?' Base indeed would be the Mi'kmaq, utterly depraved and given over to infidelity, who would maintain that there was 'no

[173] Upton 1979: 87.

such a person'."[174] But reserve life affected the stories about Kluskap. The Mi'kmaq's great helper does not fit in with life on a reserve but disappears more and more into the remote past. The Mi'kmaq started to dream of a new world, that would come to life in an uncertain, but hopefully happier future, when Kluskap would return to save his people. The reserve could be likened to what Foucault names *heterotopia*. It delineated the "different" place for both the Mi'kmaq and the colonizers. For the colonizers it was a place that stood as a contrast to the "normal" place (the British colony), where everything was in order.[175] For the Mi'kmaq it was the place where nobody wanted to be. Instead they nourished the dream of utopia, which was reflected in a longing for Kluskap's return. This land, that Kluskap would resurrect for his people, functioned as a dreamworld in comparison to the hard times on the reserves. In this dreamworld, injustice would be revenged and the good life brought back to the Mi'kmaq.

In the 1990s most Mi'kmaq have grown up on the reserves. For the main society the reserve is still the "different" place where the "different" Canadians live. For the Mi'kmaq the reserves are islands, "left-overs" of their former land, and a witness to colonial power. Or as one Mi'kmaq said to me:

> I give you something that you can grasp … I come to visit you at your home in Sweden. You let me in your house, … you feed me and you treat me good … In two weeks I isolate you in your bedroom and say no, you can't come in [to the rest of the house], unless you ask me to come out of your bedroom, and if you want meals I'll cook them for you … And eventually you just become prisoner in your home and that's what happened to us. We are locked in our bedrooms. The reserves are our bedrooms and our house is Canada.[176]

Today, in spite of poverty and social problems, the reserves are places that represent a home for the Mi'kmaq, where joy and friendship are shared. Before I had ever visited a reserve I subscribed to mainstream society's image of

---

[174] Elder 1871: 16; Rand 1894/1971: 23.

[175] Foucault 1986. Foucault is interested in certain places "that have the curious property of being in relation with all other sites, but in such a way as to suspect, neutralize, or invent the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror or reflect" (p. 24). He defines utopia (ibid.) as "sites that have a general relation or direct or inverted analogy with the real space of society". As a difference to utopia, heterotopias are real places, but outside of all places; they are "counter-sites".

[176] Vaughen Doucette, Mi'kmaq traditionalist in Eskasoni, September 2000.

it as a kind of slum, where the abuse of drugs was so widely spread that it was dangerous land to tread. But when I together with some Mi'kmaq friends awaited the sunset in Whycocomagh, or drank tea with them in a cabin on Chapel Island on St. Anne's Day, I recognized their strong feeling of belonging to a place, of being home, a sensation that resonated with memories of my own familiar surroundings in Sweden.

Local lifeworlds and abstract constructions

Parkhill's criticism of Leland's image of the Indian was that it did not correspond to the real Native life as it was lived during the 19th century, but expressed Romantic ideas about how the Indian, with his living close-to-nature, had developed a *special* relation to his environment. Parkhill instead emphasizes the *universal* way in which humans "weave themselves into the land". He says that not even the scholar is fully aware of how he or she is a part of this process of construction:

> We students of religions, like people everywhere, will tell stories that meet our religious needs, including the need to be connected to the physical landscape in which we find ourselves. We are drawn, naturally enough, to the stories that intersect our own. We hope, clandestinely, that at the intersection of these stories, if they are stories of the land, we will find our Place.[177]

One of the scholars whom Parkhill criticizes for reproducing a romantic image of the Indian is Åke Hultkrantz. He gives credit to Hultkrantz for his great knowledge of and contribution to Native studies, yet wants to show how he has romanticized the relation between Indian, nature, and land:

> … he [Hultkrantz] begins a major article on this topic by warning against generalizing about 'Indian' relations with nature, pointing out very clearly that there is 'no universal American Indian' and thus no 'common Indian attitude toward nature' ... Two pages later, however, he is drawing a generalization about 'the Indian veneration of nature,' a sure sign the stereotype is taking hold.
> Hultkrantz claims he wants to show that the relationship of 'Indian' and environment is complex, that 'the Indian veneration of nature is

[177] Parkhill 1997: 145pp.

> specific, not general.' ... In spite of his best efforts not to generalize, Hultkrantz effectively postulates a pristine 'Indian' past in which natural ecologists roamed precontact North America engaged in 'nature conservationism and nature veneration' ... Hultkrantz reflects on the way the 'common idea' of Mother Earth is weakened by agriculture and then destroyed by the 'secularization which started in the wake of white colonialism.' Christianity, too, works to 'disenchant' the 'Indian' worldview. He bemoans the loss: 'When the old beliefs are gone, red man's particular relationship to nature is there no more.'[178]

Beyond Parkhill's criticism of Hultkrantz, we should not be blind to the fact that many fieldworkers have experienced something that has inspired the thought that their hosts entertain a great respect for living beings and a deep engagement in the place in which they dwell. Parkhill's analysis of Leland's work is an important contribution to the study of what images are ascribed to whom and by whom, reminding us not to conflate academic models with lived lifeworlds. Through Parkhill's analysis we understand Leland, not the Indian, the one who constructs and not the one who is the object of the construction. Ingold (1996) would certainly agree with Parkhill that Leland's Indian image says more of the scholar than of the Algonkins, but he would rather focus on understanding who lives the life behind the construction by asking what lifeworld he or she inhabits. Anderson (1996) also emphasizes that it is a practice as hunters and gatherers that gives Northwest Coast Native American cosmology a meaningful context.

In the above quotation Hultkrantz could be right in saying that the Indian has a special feeling for his country and Parkhill in saying that this is a construction. It is a matter of what contexts we are dealing with. Parkhill's criticism of Hultkrantz' romanticism may be accounted for by the fact that the latter is talking about experiences that he has encountered in the *field*, i.e. how an Indian experiences the local place he inhabits. This is read by Parkhill as if Hultkrantz makes a statement about a *general*, Indian relation to nature. Hultkrantz himself is critical of the romantic images created in the modern Western world and even writes that they derive from a Western inability to live authentic lives. He emphasizes that other lifeworlds must be seen as products of their specific conditions: "Their values and their ways ... developed from their conditions. We can learn from them, surely, but we cannot

[178] Parkhill 1997: 121pp.

expect to become them."[179] I shall now examine if there is any substance in speaking of a specific Indian relation to his land. In doing this, I shall emphasize a phenomenological point of departure, an awareness of in what contexts statements or stories belong, and how local and abstract points of reference are used in creating identities.

The phenomenology of place

Leland in the late 19th century writes about Algonkins: "Living as he does in the woods, becoming familiar with animals, and learning how much more intelligent and allied to man they are than civilized man supposes, he believes they have souls, and were perhaps originally human". One might, with some good will, read his text as an attempt to use the conceptions of his time to express ideas similar to those of Ingold (1996) or Anderson (1996) a hundred years later. Leland addresses his text towards those who are amused by, or feel sorry for, Indians who believe in magic. Only by taking a close look at an everyday, Algonkin lifeworld, we can render their beliefs not only intellectually but also existentially comprehensible.[180]

Leland criticizes other Romantic authors like Wordsworth, Byron, Tennyson and Thoreau for their distanced view of nature. He claims that when readers encounter nature in their texts, it is from a White author's perspective:

> A few second-hand scraps of Byron and Tupper, Tennyson and Longfellow, the jingle of a few rhymes and a few similes, and a little second-hand supernaturalism, more 'accepted' than felt, and that derived from far foreign sources, does not give the white man what the Indian *feels.*[181]

It does not help that Thoreau is assisted by Penobscot Indians in his descriptions of nature. The famous nature philosopher also becomes a target of Leland's criticism:

---

[179] Hultkrantz 1981: xi. The quotation is from the introduction, in which Vecsey is interviewing Hultkrantz.

[180] Anderson (1996: 71pp.) draws a parallel between modern Americans and Northwest Coast Native Americans: "Humans appear to be more apt to believe counterfactual, exaggerated claims about those with whom they negotiate selfhood ... People who negotiate their selves with animals and plants would humanize the animals and plants, and come to believe strange things about them; by contrast, in an urban and political world, strange beliefs involve other people and their politics".

[181] Leland 1884: 339.

> This writer passed months in Maine, choosing Penobscot guides expressly to study them, to read Indian feelings and get at Indian secrets, and this account of Glooskap, whose name he forgets, is a fair specimen of what he learned. Yet he could in the same book write as follows: 'The Anglo-American can indeed cut down and grub up all this waving forest, and make a stump and vote for Buchanan on its ruins; but he cannot converse with the spirit of the tree he fells, he cannot read the poetry and mythology which retires as he advances.' ... Such a writer can, indeed, peep and botanize on the grave of Mother Nature, but never evoke *her* spirit.[182]

Leland emphasizes the importance of tradition for deeper experiences of nature, an idea that belongs to the Romantic epoch. Hence he thinks that authors who are not living close to nature would not be able to experience the secrets hidden in a landscape for "the most inspired poet can never feel that he is really 'heart-intimate' with scenery, if it has for him no ties of tradition or folk-lore".[183] It is obvious for a modern reader of Leland's texts that they reflect romantic ideas, but there are movements in modern anthropology that stress how body, practice, and experience are ways of learning that may be more lasting than intellectual constructions.[184] There is, of course, a difference in *writing* about nature and experiencing nature with all one's senses. Martin thus strongly emphasizes the phenomenology of place: "All other stories − being unpossessed by place, including not having been, literally, taught by place − are on the one hand a theft and on the other epistemological, ontological, and phenomenological nonsense."[185] He sees a danger in words starting to live a life of their own:

> Words are too perilous to be uttered out of a genuinely earthy context; they are too inherently powerful to be left unmoored, unaffili-

[182] Leland 1884: 66pp. Thoreau's *Walden* (1854) is a classic that made the author into a 19th century guru within the transcendentalist movement. Although he received much of the information in the book from local Indian guides, he does not give them credit for this (Jaimes 1995: 274).

[183] Leland & Prince 1902: 14. Leland uses Wordsworth as an example: "Yet with all this, there was still one thing wanting; that which Nature itself would not give fully, even to Wordsworth: the subtle final charm of human tradition, poetry, or romance."

[184] Cf. Michael Jackson (1989) or Pierre Bourdieu's texts in cultural sociology. The bodily experience is also stressed in what Ingold labels a "sentient ecology" (2000: 25). Ingold does not want to study mental processes (such as thinking, learning etc.) as concerning an isolated individual mind, but rather how these processes come into being when people engage themselves by living in the world. To transcend the dichotomy of mind/body, Ingold talks about the "embodied mind" or the "enminded body" (2000: 171).

[185] Martin 1992: 116.

> ated with place and the sentient beings there. Insofar as our words, both spoken and written, are not rooted in precise place and learned from such place − I would emphasize learned *in song* from place-beings − such free-floating, detached speech becomes dangerous and, often, destructive, even if inadvertently so. For such disoriented, strictly human-oriented speech has always tended to succumb to fear and worse, its corollary, mendacity.[186]

According to Laurie Whitt, to achieve knowledge, for indigenous people, is not primarily a matter of increasing a quantity of facts about external reality, but to develop one's relation to the environment by behaving in a good way: "Such knowledge is experientially-based in the fullest sense-integrating and involving all that one is."[187] Henry Old Coyote, a Crow elder, expresses his personal perspective on knowledge and meaning like this: "The purpose of the Indian's ... way of knowing, was to keep whole things whole, because only when they are whole is the living presence, the soul or spirit, really there."[188]

Local, experience-near ways of apprehending the world are not specific for Indians, but can be found in all cultures. Yi Fu Tuan has named the human way of connecting to specific places as *geopiety*.[189] Relph (1976) is interested in knowing why for humans, the meaning of place is something deeper than functional needs. This is apparent when someone is fighting for a place that is threatened in some way, or when someone expresses homesickness or nostalgia: "To be human is to live in a world that is filled with significant places: to be human is to have and to know *your* place."[190] According to Relph, there are three components that interact when a feeling for place is created: the physical environment, activities tied to it, and feelings about them.[191] People invest meaning in places they move through or look at. In some cases an existential feeling of belonging is experienced: "Existential insideness characterises belonging to a place and the deep and complete identity with a place that is the very foundation of the place concept."[192]

---

[186] Martin 1992: 94.
[187] Whitt 1995: 249.
[188] Ibid.
[189] Tuan 1976.
[190] Relph 1976: 1.
[191] Relph 1976: 47.
[192] Relph 1976: 55.

A classic study dealing with the spiritual experience of places is Mircea Eliade's *The Sacred and the Profane* (1957). Eliade distinguishes between a profane and a religious experience of place, but at the same time says that there is no completely non-religious place experience.[193] He suggests that humans, even after secularization, have a kind of "crypto-religious" way of relating to certain places. The childhood home would be an example of this. Many fiction writers have also let their main characters struggle with the complexities of place. Emigrants like Kristina in Vilhelm Moberg's great Swedish emigrant epos (1949-1959) or Albert in *Din stund på jorden* (1963) are both trying to cope with the existential disorientation that they experience in having lost their place, a feeling of being "homeless". The need to belong to a place was probably a major incentive behind the green movement of the 1970s as well as for similar, contemporary movements such as bioregionalism.

A landscape can carry obvious traces of human activity, but there are also hidden signs that are only visible to the initiated, who is anchored in the local context. Studies from North West Australia have shown the difference between how Europeans and Aborigines experience the same landscape. What a European experienced as "untouched" land was for the Aborigines highly structured, rich in myths, ceremonies, and spirit-beings.[194] Gow (1995) writes that when he first came to Santa Clara on the Urubamba River to do fieldwork, the rain forest to him was a huge, green haze. After a longer stay in a village, however, he experienced how the people's world of meanings was embedded in nature. An old log in the bushes was a monument for a person, Julio Felipe, who cut down a tree twenty-five years ago.[195] Andrews (1990), in studying place names among the Dene has found that these are more than landmarks.[196] A name might inform about the right to land, tell about historical events, give knowledge of the local environment, or mirror aspects of

---

[193] Eliade 1957/1987: 23.

[194] Relph 1976: 15. The interpretation of landscape is problematized when two cultures meet. Each cultural discourse defines its own, relevant questions. The question "How wide is a dream-line" is a completely nonsensical question within the discourse of Dream-Time, but was addressed to the Aborigines during a land conflict (Layton 1995: 213).

[195] Gow 1995: 50.

[196] Andrews 1990. Ingold emphasizes the cultural mapping of a landscape as a people's way of engaging themselves in their environment. Ingold writes (2000: 56): "Far from dressing up a plain reality with layers of metaphor, or representing it, map-like, in the imagination, songs, stories and designs serve to conduct the attention of performers *into* the world, deeper and deeper, as one proceeds from outward appearances to an ever more intense poetic involvement."

traditional technology. Andrews sees how places are connected in the stories, especially when it comes to the deeds of a culture hero, since this hero creates the names when moving in the landscape. Andrews also gives examples from the Trobriand Islands to show how a culture hero's travels can be used as an instruction for the *kula* trading expeditions. In this way mythical and economic geography is integrated.

We do not have to do fieldwork among indigenous groups to be aware of how places are invested with meaning for people. In my homecountry, a piece of land that to a visitor appears as an anonymous collection of trees and clearings might for one who has been raised there be full of memories. When I moved to our farm in the late 1970s it seemed only a beautiful spot in the Swedish archipelago. But for our old neighbors it could evoke memories of a path, a good hunt, or a special tree. The temporary visitor is not likely to see any meaningful pattern in a place, since such patterns emerge only by living in it over time.

If places constitute a basic aspect of being-in-the-world as sources of individual or group identity, it is important that they are not lost. For many Native groups the engagement in specific places has emerged in the context of a real threat of losing it. Since colonization the Indian rhetoric about their connections to the land has taken place in a context where this bond, and thus their identity, is threatening to dissolve. When a group of Mi'kmaq chiefs in the 18th century saw part of their land being threatened, they expressed their protests to the government thus:

> The place where you are, where you are building dwellings, where you are now building a fort, where you want as it were, to enthrone yourself, this land of which you wish to make yourself now absolute master, this land belongs to me, I have come from it as certainly as the grass, it is the very place of my birth and of my dwelling, this land belongs to me ... it is God who has given it to me to be my country forever ...[197]

The fear of losing one's context is a general theme in Native stories, according to Vecsey. The texts tell us about the importance of a meaningful context for humans: "it is the *rootless* life that is not only worthless, but impossible."[198] He gives examples of how Ojibwa and Hopi stories reveal three main

[197] Upton 1979: 201, note 26, cf. Reid 1995: 78.
[198] Vecsey 1991: xi.

relations of dependence: the individual is dependent on society, society on nature, and nature on the ultimate, spiritual power that encompasses everything. In other words, according to the stories, a human needs a social context embedded in a place (a landscape) permeated with meaning. Vecsey wants to avoid contrasting Indians and Europeans and thus speaks about what is human, but he still has a tendency to come back to the stereotype of the wise Indian as a repository of special insights, useful for humanity. He does not talk about the stories as Indian stories, but as:

> *human* stories. By imagining ourselves as *humans* instead of contemporary, white Americans, we can make manifest some crucial latencies of our human nature: Indian traditions have something to offer us non-Indians: values we have repressed or never known regarding environment, society, and the spiritual world.[199]

A local and a global identity

There is a difficulty when speaking in general terms about a Mi'kmaq life-world, since this changes in tune with changes in society. The Mi'kmaq were not even during the 19th century a quite homogenous group. Gabe Aquin, as mentioned above, owing to his travels to Europe and contacts with White society, surely had another perspective on the world than those who were just about to become a part of the margins of European economy. In his study of modern Mi'kmaq, Alf Hornborg (1994) has analyzed how modernity has influenced how people in different ways create their identity and relations to places. Two ways of being-in-the-world are outlined, a "local" and a "global" identity respectively. The local identity is characterized as "a profound and experience-near identification with a particular and irreplaceable *place* or set of social relationships ... Local identity implies that the specifics of a place or community are incorporated in, and largely constitutive of, a person's self-image."[200] Modernity tends to disembed the individual from local contexts and require new strategies for self-definition. The modern individual tends to focus on more abstract points of reference, and supra-local communities in turn created new ways of relating to nature, society and other persons. Hornborg would not see global identity as a specifically European feature nor as a contrast to Indian identity: "The polarity of 'local' vs. 'global' identity is as

[199] Vecsey 1991: xii.
[200] Alf Hornborg 1994: 258.

evident in modern Europe as anywhere else in the world."[201] He also points out, that even if there are differences between persons who are more embedded in local contexts and others that are more independent of them, the polarity between global and local identity should not be seen as a dichotomy between two incommensurable worlds:

> Finally, although there are great differences between people in terms of how far they have submitted to modernity, the polarity is not primarily a mode of classifying individuals but a tension which most people would recognize as running down the middle of their existence. It could be approximated by a series of linked conceptual dualities, thus: [202]

Embedded	Disembedded
Local	Global
Irreplacable	Interchangeable
Experience-near	Experience-far
Sensory	Cerebral
Holistic	Sectorized
Subjective	Objectifying

The polarity between local and abstract points of reference might also be applied in the analysis of Kluskap stories. The names and places were well-known to the audience, but when the oral narratives were turned into written texts, they were removed from their local context and transformed into general images of Indian wisdom.

As Parkhill notes, indigenous groups in various parts of the world have been assigned the mission of articulating the wisdom that formerly was ascribed to Indians. When Suzuki & Knudtson in *Wisdom of the Elders* (1992) write about "Native and scientific ways of knowing about nature" they with "Native" do not only mean an Indian, but all indigenous groups. Suzuki & Knudtson mix examples of local knowledge all over the world into a kind of general ecological wisdom. It is possible, they say, that science does not need this timeless wisdom, but *humans* do:

> But if Western science does not need the Native Mind, the *human* mind and, in particular, the Western mind and society *do.* We will

[201] Alf Hornborg 1994: 258p.
[202] Ibid.

> always need the Native Mind's vibrant images of a living natural world that can penetrate to the deepest and most heartfelt (what science calls 'irrational' or 'intuitive') realms of human understanding.[203]

The radical rift between local lifeworlds and their scholarly objectification is strongly emphasized by Martin in *The Way of the Human Being*, a description of his fieldwork among Navaho and Eskimos. After a longer period of fieldwork among the Eskimos, his attitude towards his scholarly identity changed.[204] As a symbolic gesture Martin gave away his writing desk, at which his earlier work had been written, to his Eskimo friend, who used it for cutting up salmon: "No more rhetoric on Native America to be composed on that board: it would join the power of the fish-camp; it would help feed the people, the people of the salmon."[205]

Contexts

A person in modern society can act in very different contexts, and thus has many possibilities to create his or her identity. One of my Mi'kmaq friends would one day join a *powwow* and another read the gospel in the little Catholic church on Chapel Island. He has also been a Mi'kmaq representative in the UN and as such traveled to Geneva.[206] It would today be misleading to speak of Mi'kmaq identity or tradition as a uniform category. Kurkiala (1997), who has conducted fieldwork among the Lakota, prefers to speak about contexts. In his study from Pine Ridge he distinguishes eight levels where tradition is treated differently:

> (1) *Community level* (interaction between friends, family and kin);
> (2) *Intra-tribal level* (interaction between members of the same tribe);
> (3) *Inter-tribal level* (interaction with Indians from other tribes);
> (4) *Relations with non-Indian organizations* (interaction with environmental movements, churches and support organizations);
> (5) *Relations with local Whites* (e.g. interaction with merchants and

[203] Suzuki & Knudtson 1992: 230.
[204] Martin 1999: x.
[205] Martin 1999: xi.
[206] When I asked him about his different roles he said that it is only the external form that differs. Spirituality is the same, no matter what the context, and it is this spirituality that is his incentive for participating in different ceremonies.

ranchers)
(6) *Relations with White authorities* (e.g. interaction with companies, corporations, state, and federal authorities);
(7) *Relations with non-US governments and organizations* (e.g. interaction in international forums such as the UN, with NGOs, etc.); and
(8) *Relations with other 'indigenous peoples'* (e.g. interaction in international forums such as the UN, World Council of Indigenous Peoples).[207]

Kurkiala's model shows the range of contexts in which a Lakota might act. In my own fieldwork, I found a series of different contexts that my Mi'kmaq friends managed to cope with.[208] The skill in shifting between contexts is often an advantage, for example for the neotraditionalist who in a particular issue wants the support both of his local group and in a wider context. The key to being a successful Native leader may be how he manages to gain sympathies on the reserves while also using his identity as an "Indian" in abstract contexts such as meetings concerning environmental issues. One way for skilled Mi'kmaq orators to do this could be to transform local points of references into abstract concepts such as "Mother Earth", or to talk about one of many local places connected with Kluskap and his deeds as a sacred mountain. But a change of context could also create problems for an individual who is not well trained to be a "shape-shifter". Kurkiala mentions as an example of when things "go wrong", when an elderly Lakota was going to speak to the World Council of Indigenous Peoples in Geneva:

> ... the different indigenous delegates were given seven minutes each to present their cases before the audience. Several of the younger, educated delegates successfully managed to do so. When an elderly Lakota man appeared before the council, he began his presentation in the traditional Lakota fashion of positioning himself in a historical and kinship setting. He told about his forefathers' involvement in the Indian wars, his father's exploits in World War II, and his

[207] Kurkiala 1997: 235.

[208] I could see a difference between those Mi'kmaq who embedded themselves more in local contexts and those who engaged themselves in political issues, pan-Indianism, academic studies, etc. But people sometimes do the most unexpected things. One Elder I know usually spent his days fishing eels and being with his friends and children. He rarely even left the reserve. But then he became sick. After he recovered he traveled to Yugoslavia on a Catholic pilgrimage. His daughter told me that the day before he left, he was filled with anxiety, but he did it.

> own participation in the Vietnam war. When the seven minutes ended he had not yet come to presenting his 'case' and was brusquely interrupted.[209]

Martin describes a similar situation from a meeting between a Yup'ik (Paul John) and representatives of mainstream society. They were to discuss environmental issues, amongst other things "subsistence hunting", a category coined by scholars. Paul John tries to convey what the concept means to him by referring to tradition. Martin observes how both sides have difficulties in understanding each other, because of the difference between an abstract, formalized language and a local one, and how the latter is gradually silenced: "Paul John's sentiments had no place to stand or maneuver or gain a purchase on Fish and Wildlife imagination. So his words went nowhere."[210] When a biologist talks about strategies for protecting the moose population in the area, Paul John is strongly critical. He says no one should talk aloud about the plans, since the moose might hear the conversation, feel insulted, and perhaps disappear. The problems of communication are obvious here. The biologist "stared blankly at Paul John for a moment, then continued with his plan of action, as though nothing had happened."[211]

With this example Martin shows that the Eskimos have lost their traditional arena for discussing their relation to the land. Like the Lakota man in Kurkiala's example above, a participant, in this case an Elder, referred to a more traditional context to give authority to his arguments. But he is forced to play on the authorities' home ground, where bureaucratic discourse defines the rules: "The words seem quaint in our western, empirical, utilitarian marketplace way of seeing things."[212] The local and experiential is eclipsed by an abstract, objective language. Martin observes that the contrast between these two ways of approaching the world may even emerge within the biologist himself, as when an ornithologist one day studies thrushes and is fascinated by their plumage, while the next day is frustrated at not having sufficient skills in producing statistical models. The language, according to Martin, here plays a role in distinguishing two different ways of apprehending reality: "On

[209] Kurkiala 1997: 237.
[210] Martin 1999: 49.
[211] Martin 1999: 50.
[212] Martin 1999: 111.

one hand there is the reality of linkage, we might call it, and on the other the reality of separation".[213]

The first documentation about Kluskap and the Mi'kmaq lifeworld were taken from local contexts, but the White author's ambition with the material and the reshaping of it into written texts had as a consequence that the stories in many cases lost the local embeddedness. The distorted forms not only changed the stories, they also claimed to represent the Mi'kmaq's original culture and a Mi'kmaq way of thinking. Also, if a many-layered story is reduced into pure entertainment, the significant elements in the original text become unrecognizable:

> Stories, you see, are not just entertainment. Stories are power. They reflect the deepest, the most intimate perceptions, relationships, and attitudes of a people. Stories show how a people, a culture thinks.[214]

When texts are produced outside of a local context, a new question appears: the question of authenticity. In local story-telling the audience doesn't engage in distanced reflection on the authenticity of the stories, generally because it was persons well-known to the listener who told them. But already Leland asked how genuine the story was by searching for the "original story". He even edited texts to fit into his notion of genuineness. Contemporary society's influences on the texts were disturbing for him. However, he did not have to experience how the Mi'kmaq of today would rework White authors' stories about Kluskap, a phenomenon that other scholars such as Bock in the 1960s saw as a problem for future research on Mi'kmaq traditions.[215] The problem of the "true story" is one reason why Parkhill in his critique of Leland wants to discuss concepts like "genuine" or "original". When one of his narrators, Mrs. Solomon, reiterates her version of a Kluskap story, several elements are missing, elements that Parkhill suspect have lately been added by White authors. Nevertheless, Parkhill would not claim that this specific story therefore must be traditional or "authentic":

> Mrs. Solomon's story, it seems to me, is an authentic version, if by that we mean a story appropriated to make sense of and provide support for a lived truth. This, however, is not unusual, nor par-

---

[213] Martin 1999: 112.

[214] Leonore Keeshig-Tobias in *Globe and Mail* 26/1, 1990. The quotation is from Petrone 1990: 121.

[215] Bock 1966: 85.

> ticularly 'aboriginal.' It does demonstrate the creativity and power of this Maliseet storyteller to appropriate and shape stories to make meaning in her community.[216]

Epilogue: "Indians", premodern hunters and modern reserve inhabitants

Ever since the first encounter between the Old and New World, both cultures have built their own, images of "the Other". Because the Europeans had access to writing, their side of the story was saved for posterity. The New World's Native population was depicted in the same way as its landscape, as wild nature in urgent need of being tamed by the civilized Westerner. This image of the "Indian" legitimized the conquest of the land and its inhabitants. Parallel to the image of the savage grew the image of the wise. The French lawyer Lescarbot had already in the beginning of the 17th century described the savages in New France in a positive way in order to criticize what he experienced as corruption in his home country. This image of the "Indian" was an early critique of civilization, which would continue with Rousseau's idea of a "nature child" and further on gain a strength in the Romantic era. The backyards of civilization, such as slums in the growing cities, and factories that polluted nature and enslaved the worker provoked dreams of an alternative world, where people lived in harmony with nature. The "Indian" seemed to have something to teach the town-dwellers, who had grown deaf to the voices of nature. A radically different relation to nature would be the salvation of the Westerner.

The attribution to the "Indian" of qualities that Westerners consider desirable continues to be common. Today, people are looking for new ways of saving a troubled world, and one solution offered is biocentric thinking, i.e. thinking that does not put humans in the center of creation or conceive of them as the masters of nature. But there is always a risk that the biocentric model is merely the antithesis to what has been described as "Western" (anthropocentric) thought, rather than a depiction of the complex life on the reserves and the varieties of "environmental" thinking that are nourished there.

---

[216] Parkhill 1997: 134.

In this chapter I have suggested that the traditional (premodern) hunters' ways of engaging themselves in the world created an epistemology and ethics in which the dichotomy nature/culture did not belong. Since Western scholars embraced another, dualistic perspective on the world, generated from their own, Cartesian being-in-the world, the Western study of Amerindian cosmology is a breeding ground for misinterpretations. Statements like "Indians are one with nature" could only be expressed by a person who distinguishes nature and culture.

If the biocentric model were to be applied to a modern Mi'kmaq, we should not forget that his worldview derives from a very different being-in-the-world than that of his premodern hunter ancestors. Modernity, settlement, and education introduced concepts such as nature, environment, and ecology to the Mi'kmaq. Their perspective today is that of the marginalized, modern reserve inhabitant, and to live on handouts gives another perspective on the world than that of the self-sufficient hunter. It is actually only with modernization that we might talk about a Mi'kmaq view of *nature*, where knowledge of the natural environment is woven together with ethics and spirituality into a pan-Indian "sacred ecology".

By examining images of the "Indian" and trying to fathom local people's lifeworlds there is a possibility for scholars to liberate themselves from romanticized models. To engage oneself in the world is a general, *human* activity, but this activity can operate under different conditions, where culture and legal rights to places are important components. When, in the following chapters, I attempt to show the complexity of the Kluskap character and of the Mi'kmaq worldview and tradition in general, I shall have to distinguish between two different lifeworlds from different historical periods. This will give a far more complex picture of Mi'kmaq cosmology than merely as an "Indian" way of viewing nature. I begin by describing the first transcriptions of Kluskap narratives from the end of the 19th century until the 1930s.

III. "TILL THEY SAW HIM NO MORE" (1850-1930)

Trickster and culture hero

In many North American Indian narratives there appears a species of character who is hard to define but referred to by folklorists as the trickster.[1] The trickster figure combines two different or even opposite roles.[2] He often appears as an immoral character that breaks taboos, is thievish, sexually active, antisocial, and continuously cheating those around him, but he can also be described in positive terms like a culture hero. As such he is the one who defeats monsters, steals the fire, and transforms the landscape. In some cases he can be the helper of a wise creator, but often stands in a contradictory relation to him. He is the one who makes the "bad" things: mountains, storms, or fruits that cannot be reached.[3] In some stories his destructive trickster features are predominant, but usually these are combined with heroic deeds. In other stories the immoral sides are played down and the heroic sides are given more prominence.[4]

The trickster has never been a target of worship. Traditionally he was not looked upon as a god but more like a peculiar character in a mythical time. The place of his dwelling varies in different traditions. Many stories tell of his disappearance and assert that he will never again interfere in people's lives. However, the stories of his deeds still exist and it is these deeds that are the objects of reverence.[5] Some of the stories are surrounded with taboos such as that they can only be told on special occasions: like nighttime or in winter.[6]

---

[1] Gill and Sullivan (1992: 308) derive the general use of the word from an article by Brinton: "The Hero-God of the Algonkins as a Cheat and Liar" (1885). An often-quoted study of the trickster is Paul Radin's *The Trickster* (1956). For further writings about the trickster figure cf. Fisher (1946), Hultkrantz (1967), Ricketts (1966) and Gill (1982).

[2] Ricketts (1966: 343) divides the personality of the trickster into three parts: trickster, transformer and culture hero.

[3] Ricketts 1987: 49.

[4] Coyote in the South West of the USA has more of the attributes of a trickster than has the Great Hare among the Algonkins, who appears to be a more noble character.

[5] Ricketts 1966: 344.

[6] Ibid., Hallowell (1960: 41), cf. Jones (1905: 189): "An Algonkin holds that the proper time to recite a myth is in winter, and that its recitation shall be attended with some kind of formality; and that to tell a myth out of season and without formality is to take chances with something beyond human power." Wallis & Wallis

The North American trickster appears under different animal names, for example Coyote, Raven or Hare.[7] On the East Coast he takes the guise of a human being. The name varies: Kluskap in the Atlantic provinces of Canada and in Maine, Tcikapis in Northern Quebec, Manabush and Wisakejak in more Western groups.[8] The Kluskap figure like the Great Hare among the Algonkin, is generally a friendly character.[9] He is often spoken of as a wandering magician who transforms the landscape, teaches culture, assists people, and delivers prophecies. In Leland's version it is never Kluskap who is responsible for the mean deeds, but another character, a wicked trickster by the name of Lox.[10] This figure appears as an animal, sometimes as a badger and sometimes as a wolverine.

"Trickster" is, however, not a word that is used in indigenous cultures. When Gill and Sullivan examine different theories about the trickster they emphasize that the word has been coined by academics with the purpose of classifying within a single category many different characters, who share some common characteristics.[11] My examination of Kluskap in this chapter will attempt to embed him in a local lifeworld, rather than discuss the trickster concept that academics have devised for a multiplex and diffuse character in North American Indian narratives. Since Kluskap stories are documented for the first time in the 19th century, it is the lifeworld of the Mi'kmaq during this period that should frame the historical figure.

(1955: 319) mention on the contrary that there are no taboos tied to the stories that were collected among the Mi'kmaq 1911-1912, e.g. that they could only be told during some seasons or under certain circumstances. The only restriction concerned the story of *Kitpusiagana*, which wrongly told could cause rainfall (p. 484).

[7] Coyote is found among Native groups in California, the Great Plains, Great Basin and the Plateau, Raven among the Northwest Coast Natives and the Great Hare among the Algonkins.

[8] The Eastern coastal groups were previously called the Wabanaki: Mi'kmaq, Passamaquoddy, Maliseet, Penobscot, Wawenock and Abenaki (Fisher 1946: 226). Tcikapis is a dwarf, who has a salient role among the Montagnais-Naskapi (Fisher 1946: 228). Hultkrantz (1967: 28) also uses the name Wisakä for Wisakejak. He describes these mentioned characters as more of tricksters than Kluskap, who usually appears as a culture hero.

[9] Hultkrantz (1967: 28), Leland 1884: 13.

[10] Leland 1884: 13: "Lox ranges from Punch to Satan, passing through the stages of an Indian Mephistopheles and the Norse Loki, who appears to have been his true progenitor."

[11] Gill and Sullivan (1992: 308p.), cf. Harrod's critique (2000: 144) of the trickster concept as "too general to capture the unique features of the beings who have specific identities in particular traditions."

To turn the perspective − can silent voices speak?

Story-telling among the Mi'kmaq is documented already in the 17th century. Denys mentions how the motifs often were taken from nature and that the narration could go on for days:

> There were some old men who composed them, as one would tell children of the times of the fairies, of the Asses' skin, and the like. But they compose them about the Moose, the Foxes, and other animals, telling that they had seen some powerful enough to have taught others to work, like the Beavers, and had heard of others which could speak. They composed stories which were pleasing and spirited. When they told one of them, it was always as heard from their grandfather. These made it appear that they had knowledge of the Deluge, and of matters of the ancient Law. When they made their holiday feasts, after being well filled, there was always somebody who told one so long that it required all the day and evening with intervals for laughing. They were great laughers. If one was telling a story, all listened in deep silence; and if they began to laugh, the laugh became general. During such times they never failed to smoke ... Those storytellers who seemed more clever than the others, even though their cleverness was nothing more than sportiveness, did not fail to make fun of those who took pleasure in listening to them.[12]

The skill of delivering an elegant speech was highly valued and it was a requirement for the chief, *sagamo*, that he should have the talent to express himself well. He spoke at feasts, *tabagie*, and his speech could go on for hours. Songs with varying motifs were also chanted. Lescarbot tells us, that the Mi'kmaq could sing a song to praise the Devil, who showed them where prey could be found. Others praised highly brave chiefs, who had killed many enemies.[13] Le Clercq confirms the custom to make speeches at feasts: "All their feasts begin with speeches, which the host makes to those assembled for the purpose of declaring to them the subject on account of which he has wished to entertain the company; and they are finished with dances and songs

[12] Denys 1672/1908: 14p.

[13] Lescarbot 1609/1928: 234pp. Lescarbot, who is more tolerant toward the "savages" than the Jesuit Biard, comments and excuses the Mi'kmaq tradition to praise the Devil for the food. He says that the French also have their songs of praise, but since they are better instructed the psalms and the songs are devoted to God, who gives them their daily bread.

which are the usual compliments of our Indians."[14] Maillard makes an interesting observation about the character of the speech:

> They have two distinctions of style; the one noble, or elevated, for grave and important subjects, the other ignoble, or trivial, for familiar or vulgar ones. But this distinction is not so much with them, as with us, marked by a difference of words, but of terminations. Thus, when they are treating of solemn, or weighty matters, they terminate the verb and the noun by another inflexion, than what is used for trivial or common conversation.[15]

When Europeans started to systematically write down the oral traditions during the end of the 19th century, the Mi'kmaq had been in contact with Europeans for four hundred years. Demographic, economic, political, and ideological factors had transformed their culture. Their life as independent hunters and gatherers was at this time finally being replaced by life in the reserves. However, since only a few Mi'kmaq were able to write, their oral tradition still played an important part in their lives. The stories about Kluskap were a way of interpreting the world that surrounded them, both the well-known landscape and the strange new things that had been introduced by the colonists.

Text: fiction, facts or "faction"

The earliest notes on Kluskap and Mi'kmaq oral tradition were made by Silas Rand (1850, 1894) and Charles Leland (1884).[16] Their writings are colored by the Romantic heritage, but the writers' personal agendas underlying their Mi'kmaq interest also shine through the representations. Rand's and Leland's texts are often used by scholars in search of the earliest writings about Kluskap, and they are rich sources for authors that want to popularize the stories for a general public. As written texts they can, of course, be put under the deconstructionist's critical magnifying glass and torn into pieces. Although the authors have had the ambition to melt the stories together into *a* grand narrative, their texts, however, still consist of many layers and there are fractures where it becomes obvious that there are several voices speaking. Prins calls this phenomenon the "multivocality of history", where the reader

[14] Le Clercq 1691/1968: 292. Biard (*Jesuit Relations* 1959, III: 81) informs us that a speech was not only important at feasts, but it was also necessary to make a speech before an exchange of goods could take place.
[15] Maillard 1758: 35. Maillard reproduces an elegant and well-formulated speech of thanks (pp. 7).
[16] Leland's work also includes Passamaquoddy, Penobscot and Maliseet stories.

of a text today must be focused on decoding the texts in order to decide what is a Mi'kmaq voice and what is the author's narration: "[A]n in-depth understanding of European ideology is of crucial value in our effort to deconstruct European records concerning Mi'kmaqs ... who wrote what, why, where, and when."[17] The different voices, the "little" points of views and the main point of view, should be distinguished, illustrating the difference between a novel and an historical text.

In fiction the actual narrator can easily let a fictive narrator take over the storytelling. An example of a fictive narrator is Molly Bloom in James Joyce's *Ulysses*, as in her monologue in the final chapter. The world is filtered through her thinking, but Joyce is the actual narrator, who controls her being. To distinguish the different points of view is complicated in e.g. Leland's versions of Algonkin stories. As previously mentioned, Leland has imposed his own designs on the text. He is, like Joyce, the actual author and narrator of the text. Yet Leland's ambition is to write down Mi'kmaq stories as they were really told to him, which means giving the Mi'kmaq the role of the actual narrator. This procedure is *formally* not different from Joyce's literary ambition to let Molly Bloom take over the storytelling. But there is an important difference between the two texts. Molly Bloom remains a fictive character, who is from beginning to end created by the author as part of the text, but the Mi'kmaq in Leland's text have actually existed as living beings in 19th century America. Joyce has created Molly Bloom, and then let the world be seen through her eyes; Leland organized his text but did not create Kluskap and the Mi'kmaq.[18] The legends he wrote down are neither fiction nor fact, but rather both, a kind of *"faction"*: an ambiguous story. One layer is composed of oral stories, which give a Mi'kmaq point of view and in which the narrative motifs are inspired by lived experience. Another layer gives Leland's point of view and serves as a framework for the story, which controls but does not wipe out the "little" stories. Leland's way of editing the collected stories can be studied as one author's particular interpretation of the material under the influence of a certain epoch, which at one level makes it

[17] Prins 1996: 5.

[18] G. Iggers (1997: 132p.) is one modern historian who has criticized the consistent use in historiography of models generated from Derrida, Barthes or Lyotard: "Nevertheless this philosophy of language lends itself better to literary criticism than to historical writing. For historical accounts, even if they use forms of narrative that are closely patterned on literary models, still claim to portray or reconstruct an actual past to a greater extent than is the case in fictional literature."

easy to deconstruct. But for the Mi'kmaq the oral stories were narratives from their daily life, which make the "little" stories into more than a fiction.

To distinguish different layers in a text is thus one way of tracing the "little" stories within a "Grand Narrative". First they have to be distinguished from the author's ambitions and goals with the text. A second problem remains when reading historical texts. The interpretation of these texts can not be presented as *one* given truth for the modern reader, but is dependent on the reader's individual experiences and his or her contemporary social environment.[19] How should a scholar work with historical sources when acknowledging that interpretation is a product of the reader's individual and cultural experience? In *The End of Drumtime* (1993) Rydving discusses the problem of interpretation that accompanies historic sources:

> All the disciplines in the humanities take it for granted that it is in some way possible to understand other human beings, even those who lived long ago or belong to other cultures. The difference between the disciplines lies in whether it is possible or not to verify whether an interpretation is correct. Anyone who studies a culture of today can always check the interpretations with representatives of the culture under study. There is no corresponding possibility to do this for someone who is engaged in research on older periods. It is possible, however, with the help of the available source material, to create a picture that is understandable and coherent (for us), although another person with other points of departure could arrive at a different description.[20]

A text is always open for a reader to reinterpret, and the interpretation of historical sources is thus generated as a dialogue between the present and the past. Our way of approaching past times is dependent on the questions our cultural setting prompts us to ask.[21] Rand and Leland, the first to write down

---

[19] Gadamer *Truth and Method* (1960/1975). Gadamer uses Heidegger's phenomenological ideas in his works on interpreting texts. According to Heidegger, a human is not an objective observer of the world, but rather locked into her position in the world. Her horizon is as wide as her own consciousness, and her thoughts are always generated from the historical process of which they are a part ("In-der-Welt-Sein") (Benktsson 1971, Selden & Widdowson 1993: 52).

[20] Rydving 1993: 27.

[21] Selden & Widdowson 1993: 54, cf. Gadamer (1960/1975). J. Friedman (1994: 143) stresses that the Western monopoly in historiography is more to be found in power than in a degree of truth: "Since the attribution of meaning and construction of cultural models is a motivated practice our own purported truth-

Mi'kmaq oral stories, were also "readers" of Mi'kmaq oral tradition and thus constrained by their special vantage points. They had their "horizons of expectation", which made them classify the texts in terms of Western genres, i.e. as legends.[22] When the Mi'kmaq stories were classified as folklore or legends, they were automatically distinguished from Western historiography. However, postmodern theories of literature can take credit for a more respectful way of evaluating the little stories. Both the colonizer's *and* the Mi'kmaq stories are *interpretations* of an historical process and none of them can claim to give the absolute truth. But even if we know that a reader today is constrained both by the historical writer's interpretation of his era and by his own reading, it would be like throwing the baby out with the bath water to let this paralyze us. The danger with a totally relativistic treatment of historical sources is that absurd discussions may arise, like whether the Holocaust was an historical event at all.[23]

Although the anthropologist can verify his or her sources in another way than the historian, there might still be some hesitation about how the information should be interpreted. Jean-Marie Gibbal is one of many anthropologists who have questioned the degree of truth in his material. He sees how "fiction" emerges when the anthropologist leaves his field to write his text. A conversation between the scholar and the informant changes in the printed text from a dialogue into an edited account, written from the writer's point of view. Gibbal's self-criticism ends in hesitation toward the finished work. How can he know if he has "read" the "Other" in a correct way? To escape the dilemma he uses negation to test what is reasonable in his "reading":

> In no case can I elicit from the gaw the opposite of what appears to be the core reality of the Ghimbala: that it is a therapeutic cult submissive to the presence of a dominant Islam, which puts its existence in danger, particularly at the present time. To affirm, for example, that the rise of the Islamic fundamentalism and the current economic crises favor the maintenance, even the expansion, of the

---

value vision of history and ethnography must be understood in terms of the way in which it is produced, if we are to place it alongside the way other people produce their own visions."

[22] "Horizons of expectation" is a quotation from Jauss (1982), cf. Selden & Widdowson (1993: 53). A hundred years later scholars would question the Western genre classifications when it comes to Native literature, cf. Petrone (1990), Vecsey (1991) and Grinde Jr. (1995).

[23] Iggers 1997: 13.

> Ghimbala would be on the order of an insane interpretation and an atrocious farce.[24]

In a similar way as starvation and Islam affected the stories among the people Gibbal studied, the establishment of a reserve life, poverty, and involvement in a global market must have left traces in the Mi'kmaq stories from the 19th century. To dismiss the accounts of Kluskap's actions as completely mythical fantasies, because they do not follow the Western way of writing history, is thus not a productive approach. The oral stories are Mi'kmaq *interpretations* and narrative arrangements of an historical process that they have been a part of. When their tradition was recorded, the Mi'kmaq had not experienced Western schools but dwelled in local lifeworlds dominated by relatives, alliances, and the natural surroundings. It is within this framework that the Mi'kmaq wrote their history, intertwining historical events with creative, local imagination.

The Mi'kmaq stories from the 19th century thus give the reader a double dilemma. If the Mi'kmaq voice is to be heard through the written texts, the first thing to do must be to take into account the early scholars' own ambition with the text. In contrast to a fictional text the historical text has the ambition to refer to an external world. The second problem concerns the reader. Narrative texts do not present one, objective truth, but could be interpreted differently depending on the reader. I shall now present the early writers, scholars, and popular writers on Mi'kmaq literature in order to clarify their particular points of view.

Silas Rand: Giving instructions on the True Faith

It is impossible to say how far back in time Kluskap can be found in Mi'kmaq oral tradition. He is never mentioned in the stories that were recorded by the missionaries in the 17th century. Bernard Hoffman speculates that Kluskap, or more probably his dead younger brother, is equivalent to *Papkootparout*, lord of the kingdom of death, mentioned by Le Clercq, but the historical data are too meager for drawing parallels between these characters.[25]

The first to write down Kluskap stories and the one who is given credit for "discovering" him is Silas Rand.[26] Rand worked for 40 years as a missionary among the Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia. In the middle of the 19th century he

---

[24] Gibbal in *Genii of the River Niger* 1988/1994: 167.
[25] Hoffman 1946: 400, 408. The story of *Papkootparout* is found in Le Clercq 1691/1968: 208pp.
[26] Rand 1894/1971: xxi.

describes how many of his colleagues were called to mission abroad, but how he himself was inspired by a Professor Chipman to take care of the pagans in the province, i.e. the Mi'kmaq. In order to succeed with his work, Rand was obliged to learn their language, and he tells us how he spent a lot of time among the Indians in their *wigwams*. At the same time as he was constructing a Mi'kmaq grammar he became acquainted with a lot of stories which he collected and published as *Legends of the Micmacs* (1894). If the Mi'kmaq had earlier been heard of only indirectly in missionary literature, in scattered quotations, and in some explorers' texts, here for the first time since the European arrival is a more systematic collection of Mi'kmaq oral tradition, albeit only in English. Since Rand saw as his mission to work for a Protestant evangelization of the Mi'kmaq, he preferred to dismiss their stories as nonsense. At the same time, however, he had to admit that these stories told us about a world that was then still very important for the Mi'kmaq: "Now what sense or meaning there may be at the bottom of all this nonsense, I leave to the speculations of others. Some allusion to these fables appeared necessary, in order to a correct understanding of the cast of mind and prejudices of the Indian."[27]

Rand saw as his task to be a missionary among the Mi'kmaq, not to collect legends. In his comments to the texts he gives some information about the story-tellers, and sometimes also about from whom they have learned the stories, but he does not let this information disturb the text itself. His primary interest was not the Mi'kmaq lifeworld, but to see if there were any connections between the Mi'kmaq stories and Christianity that would make his mission easier: "Now whether those legends have to some extent the traditional reminiscences of God's dealings with mankind of old for their basis, or whether they are pure inventions, they show the bent of the human mind, and that the Divine Revelation is in harmony with man's necessities and the promptings of his nature."[28] From *The history of Kitpooseagunow*, for instance, Rand drew parallels with the biblical Moses.[29] At one point he compares the story of *Glooscap and his four visitors* with a parable from which the reader or listener among other things can learn that: "All who seek divine help will find it. We may not know where God is; but let us search after him, and we shall find him" or "Truth is disclosed to the mind gradually; we first

[27] Rand 1850: 29.
[28] Rand 1894/1971: 81p.
[29] Rand 1894/1971: 75.

find a small, dim path, but it becomes plainer; the Divinity is often found before he is known."[30]

Rand started to collect his stories in the middle of the 19th century and continued with this work for several decades. Since his aim was to spread the Protestant faith among the Catholic Mi'kmaq Indians and not to save the indigenous culture, he saw more of a possibility than a threat in the assimilation of the group into Canadian society. He points out over and over again that the Mi'kmaq had undergone radical changes toward further assimilation into White society, but he saw these transformations as something good. One reason for his positive attitude could be that he considered that this would make the "savage" more civilized, another could be found in Rand's more personal interests. If the Mi'kmaq could desert their pagan beliefs for Catholicism, Rand saw promising possibilities for making them convert from Catholicism to Protestantism. Rand often returns to the changing conditions among the Mi'kmaq. When a woman told him that she had learned a particular story from her father, she stressed that it was an ancient story. Rand, however, in his comments says that although it might come from distant times, an oral story undergoes changes when it is transmitted from one person to another. The Mi'kmaq, on the contrary, would generally emphasize that they had learned the stories as they were told by the older generation.[31] In the legend *The small baby and the big bird* the first sentence is: *Weegigijik kesegoök* (the old people are encamped) which according to Rand means: "This is a tale of ancient times, embodying ancient manners, beliefs, customs, conditions, and operation." The next sentence is "There was once a large Indian village". Rand says that these two sentences usually form the introduction to the stories and have an important meaning for the Mi'kmaq. To hear of a grandiose past served, according to Rand, to reduce the pain among the Mi'kmaq living under extreme poverty.[32]

Rand gives many examples of European influences in the stories − money, iron, kings − and stresses that the Europeans at that time had inhabited the

---

[30] Rand 1894/1971: 258; cf. 105 and 124. There are further examples of missionaries looking for an underlying and primordial Christianity behind the "primitive" worldviews. In the work of Father Tempels, *Bantu Philosophy*, the "philosophy" of the group is examined in order to expose a hidden Christian message, suggesting that the Bantu people could more easily be civilized, i.e. Christianized (Green 1995: 26).

[31] The custom to anchor the individual stories in a larger complex seems to have filled an important function among the Mi'kmaq. Isabelle Knockwood remembers (1992: 14p.) how the Elders began their stories by saying "*sa'gewey na*", which means that the story derives from ancient times and had been told by older relatives. Parsons (1925: 59) gives the word *sa'kis* as the concluding sentence of every tale.

[32] Rand 1894/1971: 82-83.

American continent for more than 400 years.[33] In *The prince and the peasant-girl* he also gives examples of how European culture has been integrated into Mi'kmaq lifeworlds. Two neighboring kings live so close to each other that a prince could bring his princess bride home within the same day. Furthermore it is the king's duty to look after the poor, so that they will not starve but have access to seed potatoes. In both cases the life of the king reminds one more of the life of a Mi'kmaq chief than that of a European monarch. A poor peasant girl's lack of education or status does not meet with any obstacles at the court. As long as she is kind, beautiful, and well-dressed she is completely suitable "to set before the king".[34]

Leland: Collecting "the poetry of the Volk*"*

Some years later than Rand, Charles Leland in 1882 began to collect Algonkin stories and in 1884 published *The Algonquin Legends of New England*. This collection recapitulates stories from the Mi'kmaq in New Brunswick and from their neighbors: the Passamaquoddy, Maliseet, and Penobscot. Since 1883 Leland had been corresponding with Rand, who sent a manuscript of 900 pages to him with permission to use whatever he thought was of value. The only thing Rand required was help with postage and that he got his manuscript back again.[35] Leland makes use of Rand's collection in his edition, including some Kluskap stories.[36] Leland's mission was quite different from Rand's. He defined his task as to gather and write down interesting data for posterity: "I believe that when the Indian shall have passed away there will come far better ethnologists than I am, who will be much more obliged to me for collecting raw material than for cooking it."[37] Yet, one subject that he seemed tempted to speculate about was the similarities he saw between the Algonkin myths and the Scandinavian Edda sagas. He pondered if the similarities were survivals from contacts with the Vikings: "But I do not say that this was positively the case; I simply set forth in this book a great number of curious coincidences, from which others may draw their own conclusions."[38]

---

[33] Rand 1894/1971: 76.

[34] Rand 1894/1971: 154. Note that Rand tends to conclude that such unlikely ingredients derive from Mi'kmaq society rather than from European folklore.

[35] Parkhill 1997: 39, Leland 1884: ix.

[36] Rand 1894/1971: vii.

[37] Leland 1884: iv.

[38] Leland 1884: v. Leland sees a possible way for the stories to have been transmitted: "When we, however, remember that the Eskimo once ranged as far south as Massachusetts, that they did not reach Greenland till the fourteenth century, that they had for three centuries intimate relations with Scandinavians, that they were

He particularly emphasizes the character of Kluskap, "who is by far the grandest and most Aryan-like character ever evolved from a savage mind ..."[39]

If Rand was the great missionary, Leland became the great visionary. He had spent a long time in Germany and was fascinated by the European Romanticists' ideas of a "*Volk*-soul", which connected people with their land. Back in America it was not in the works of Tennyson, Longfellow, or Thoreau that he found the depth of the American *Volk*-soul, but among the indigenous inhabitants that for generations had roamed the landscape, lived closed to it and enticed it to disclose its secrets. Leland edits different Algonkin stories into a grand narrative, which according to the spirit of Romanticism would embody a folk soul corresponding to that of European folklore. In order to get as close to the "original soul" as possible, he went one step further and selected some of the stories in the legends and rewrote them as poetry, which he published together with John Prince in 1902 under the title *Kulóskap the Master: And Other Algonkin Poems*. In the preface Leland says that he is convinced that the stories originally were presented as songs. He refers to a manuscript by Louis Mitchell as evidence that behind the prose version there was a hidden poem. Mitchell was a Passamaquoddy who collected texts for Leland. Leland writes: "Three of the poems Mitchell wrote out for me in exact, though often quite ungrammatical language, which was so close to the original that the meters betrayed themselves throughout."[40] The conversions from oral stories to edited prose and further on into a poetic form show how Leland works with the texts. Here is an example of a story from one of his primary sources (Gabe Acquin):

> Glooscap & his brother were twins they talked to one and other before they were born, the youngest said to the oldest they must be born right away, they must get out into this world, the oldest said we must wait he could not stop him the other however he must get into the world. So he went out of his mother's side, this killed the

---

very fond of legends, and that the Wabanaki even now mingle with them, the marvel would be that the Norsemen had not left among them traces of their tales or of their religion" (ibid.).

[39] Leland 1884: 2. Alfred Bailey (1937) criticizes Leland's theory of a Scandinavian influence in the Algonkin stories and divides them instead into four categories: "The first has purely Indian elements. The second shows Indian motives together with mixed decorations. The third has purely European constituents. And the fourth gives evidence of having arisen from contact of Europeans and Indians in the Euro-American environment" (p. 188). Other scholars say that centuries of culture contacts have made it impossible to draw any sharp limits between the cultures at all (Wallis & Wallis 1955: 321).

[40] Leland & Prince 1902: 12.

> mother, they agreed to go then after this; after a few years the younger brother asked the older what would kill him (the older) he thought a long time ...[41]

Since the transcription to a large extent lacks punctuation Leland is compelled to change it in order to convert it into a text. He further adds his own formulations to create an aura of Indian wisdom. Leland's modified text runs like this:

> In the old time. Far before men knew themselves, in the light before the sun, Glooskap and his brother were as yet unborn; they waited for the day to appear. Then they talked together, and the youngest said, 'Why should I wait? I will go into the world and begin my life at once.' Then the elder said, 'Not so, for this were a great evil.' But the younger gave no heed to any wisdom: in his wickedness he broke through his mother's side, he rent the wall; his beginning of life was his mother's death.
> Now, in after years, the younger brother would learn in what lay the secret of the elder's death ...[42]

The prose version goes through a further rewriting when Leland wants to reveal the "original", poetic form:

> Wonderful traditions
> Of the olden time;
> Very old indeed,
> Ere the world began:
>
> The great lord Kulóskap
> Who in after days
> Was worshipped everywhere
> By the Wabanaki
> Or Children of the Dawn,
> Was as yet unborn,
> Living as a twin
> With another named
> Malumsis − the Wolf.

[41] Parkhill 1997: 55.
[42] Leland 1884: 106, cf. Parkhill 1997: 55.

Wolf, the lesser one,
As his brother was good
So was this one bad;
One, the Lord of Light,
One, of Darkness dire.

Now ere they were born,
The two a council held
That they might decide
How they would be born.
And Kulóskap said:
'I shall be content
If I may come to life
Even as others come.'
But Malsum, the Wolf,
Said: 'Just as you will;
But I am too great
E'er to see the light
As common creatures do;
I will burst to light
Rending everything
E'en through death to life.'

So it came to pass
Kulóskap, the Lord,
Came in peace to light;
Malsum kept his word,
And the mother died.

So the two grew up,
Till one day the Wolf,
Who knew that both were given
Strange mysterious lives
Charmed 'gainst everything
Save one concealed death,
Asked of the elder what
His hidden bane might be?[43]

[43] Leland & Prince 1902: 43pp. Parkhill (1997) further shows that Leland had put together his version of a twin myth from different sources and thus that this story is not as uniform as it seems in the legend collection.

Here is another text that shows how Kluskap creates the animal world:

> Glooskap made all the animals. He made them at first very large. Then he said to Moose, the great Moose who was as tall as Ketawkqu's, 'What would you do should you see an Indian coming?' Moose replied, 'I would tear down the trees on him.' Then Glooskap saw that the Moose was too strong, and made him smaller, so that Indians could kill him.[44]

Leland's re-writing of the text is rather extensive:

> Kulóskap the Lord of Light
> Made all the animals.
> First, he created
> All of giant size;
> Such was the beginning.
> Then he said to Teâm, The Moose,
> Who was tall as the Kiwa'kw,
> The colossal giant of the mountain,
> The awful king of the forest,
> The lord of the roaring river:
> 'What wouldst thou do, Teâm,
> Shouldst thou see man a-coming?'
> Answered the monstrous Teâm,
> 'I would tear the trees down on him.'
> Then the Lord Kulóskap
> Saw that the Moose was too strong;
> So he made him smaller and weaker
> So that the Indians could kill him.[45]

To come as close as possible to the "original" story and the "original poetry of the *Volk*", Leland even changed details that he interpreted as later introductions. In the legend of the *Chenoo*-girl a despairing girl begs her parents to kill her. She had become the victim of sorcery after having rejected the courting of a man, and now she feels how her inner nature is slowly transformed into a violent character:

---

[44] Leland 1884: 19. *Ketawkqu* is a monstrous giant.
[45] Leland & Prince 1902: 51.

> ‘How can we kill you?’ her mother asked.
> ‘You must shoot at me’ she replied, ‘with seven arrows. And if you can kill me with seven shots all will be well.’[46]

Leland comments the story in a footnote by saying that the oral version actually speaks of guns, not arrows. But, says Leland, “the Chenoo stories are evidently very ancient, and refer to terrors of the olden time.”[47]

Leland’s obsession with documenting the original stories had its particular reasons. He did not see any future for the Indians and predicted that they would soon be devoured by modern society and disappear, and that all their rich traditions thereby would be lost forever.[48] Leland was not alone in nourishing the belief that the stories carried an essence from an original Indian culture without European influences.[49] Today we know that traditions are used by humans to articulate their lifeworld, and if the lifeworld changes, the stories change accordingly. The survival of many indigenous groups today hinges on the fact that people have been open to changes in their worldview, yielding a double process of resistance and accommodation. The problem of coping with a hegemonic society is not solved by choosing isolation but by being flexible in one’s lifeworld, and by the ability to see continuities despite the challenges of modernity.[50]

Myth, legend, or ahtookwokun

Rand and Leland referred to the Mi’kmaq oral tradition as legends. With this determination of genre they also defined Kluskap and the beliefs about him. The Mi’kmaq themselves called their stories *ahtookwokun*.[51] The division into myths and legends has its origin in Europe and signifies specific types of

---

[46] Leland 1884: 253.

[47] Leland ibid., footnote, cf. Parkhill 1997: 57.

[48] For Leland it was of great importance to document the Algonkin legends, since he saw a deep bond between them and the North American continent itself. Through the stories the settlers could take part of this bond and gain a feeling for home in a landscape in which they still felt alien: “And I venture to say from the deepest conviction that it will be no small occasion of astonishment and chagrin, a hundred years hence, when the last Algonkin Indian of the *Wabano* shall have passed away, that so few among our literary or cultured folk cared enough to collect this connected aboriginal literature” (Leland & Prince 1902: 15).

[49] Ruth Finnegan (1991) describes how, previously, the anthropologist’s project was to document the “traditional” story and focus on the “original” form.

[50] Gill 1982: 36.

[51] Rand 1894/1971: 75. In his dictionary Rand distinguishes “a story” (*agunoodumakun*) from “a fabulous story” (*ahtookwokun*) (1888/1994: 254). He also uses the word *agunoodumakun* for “news” (1888/1994: 179). Ruth Whitehead says that *aknutmagn* is Mi’kmaq for news or oral stories (1991: introduction).

narrative.[52] The legend most often involves a named character in a recognizable place. It is comparatively close to contemporary time. Like the legend the myth is a subject of belief, but the given names of places and people differ. The myth depicts another or earlier world, where gods or divine beings act in a non-historical time. There is an aspect of entertainment in both genres, but it does not dominate as in the world of the tale. The tale neither gives names of persons or places, nor has it ever been an object of belief. The main characters can be humans, as in the legend, or non-humans, as in the myth.[53]

Penny Petrone (1990) has focused on Native Canadian literature in her discussions of problems of text classification. Since Native stories stem from oral tradition they should not, of course, be treated in the same way as written texts. In Native oral stories different Western genres intertwine with one another, such as narratives, songs, prayers, or political speeches. The conventional, Western division of text genres is simply not applicable in these cases. An "Indian myth", for example, may, be combined with personal experiences.[54] Some stories are essentially didactic and gave continuity in people's lives:

> It bound 'the sacred and the profane, the individual and the tribal, the past, present, and future, and it encompass[ed] the teller, the listener, the tribe, and the land, and the universe.' By transmitting specific cultural knowledge, with its specific meanings and messages, it helped strengthen tribal identity and provided for its continuity.[55]

Petrone says that the narrative situation and the message in the story were tightly intertwined with the speech performance. For instance, the allegory and the metaphor were of great importance, since direct confrontation and open conflict would be particularly threatening in small groups. The function of the speech was often to convince others, give advice, or create unanimity in different matters. By keeping the message at a more general level, and by using analogies, the risk of insulting anyone was diminished. People who were used to this manner of expression understood the hidden message, but

---

[52] Vecsey (1991: 2) is also critical of the Western genre concepts and says that the storytellers themselves would rather speak of "traditions", "stories", or "sacred narratives". Cf. Grinde Jr. 1995: 204.

[53] Pettersson 1972: 214; Bascom 1984: 9.

[54] Parsons 1925: 57.

[55] Petrone 1990: 3-4. Petrone has borrowed the quotation from H. Lutz.

the ones who were not would often miss the point, since they did not understand the important connotations. The richly metaphorical language is mentioned early in the historical sources. In the 17th century Le Clercq touches on the problem of not having the cultural competence which was required to understand the stories of the Gaspesians (Mi'kmaq). He was especially annoyed at official meetings, when the speeches to a great extent consisted of metaphor. Petrone sees the rich use of metaphor as the main reason for Westerners to misunderstand Native oratory, and to lose, substitute or deliberately distort words in order to fit into their own conceptions. She considers the work of Silas Rand a good example of how songs and stories were transformed to fit into the romantic and sentimental ideals of his time.[56]

Petrone also sees, as does Grinde Jr. (1995), a further problem in letting the West provide the framework for evaluating Native stories. Since oral tradition mixes daily life with spiritual and philosophical elements, it is also to deform the stories when well-meaning scholars try to demythologize them to make them come closer to a Western-style historiography. The stories become meaningless (or possibly just entertaining) if taken out of their context:

> Contemporary critics argue that in order to appreciate the significance of these narratives in the lives of the native people, it is important to read the stories not as isolated literary narratives, but as part of the socio-cultural and historical contexts of the culture groups in which they developed, since they become relatively meaningless − though entertaining as stories − if they are removed from their cultural settings.[57]

Kluskap stories, collected in the 19th and early 20th century, must thus be understood in relation to the historical context that created them and from the narrative situation in which they were recounted. The stories were told by

[56] Petrone 1990: 6. As earlier mentioned Leland has also been criticized (Parkhill 1997) for his romantization of the Algonkin stories, but there is a big difference between the authors. Leland criticizes the nature perspective among the romantic writers and emphasizes the "Indian" way of looking at nature. Rand was not that categorical. Both writers comment on the texts on nature by Tennyson, but where Leland sees shallow veneer (Leland 1884: 339), Rand sees a linguistic equilibrist at work. He comments on one of the Mi'kmaq legends, *The King's daughter and the man servant*: "How like some of our own legends! Is it not really one of our own? In the hands of Tennyson what a splendid poem it would make! He could begin with the misfortunes of the young count, could paint in brilliant colors the progress of events, and even introduce a splendid *dénouement* of the plot" (Rand 1894/1971: 442).

[57] Petrone 1990: 12, cf. Grinde Jr. 1995.

skilled and respected storytellers and the listener did not need to get all the details explained, since much of the content was already known.[58] As revised, written texts, however, they can mislead the reader into believing that they carry a timeless Mi'kmaq wisdom. But not even the text itself expresses such a homogenous message as a first reading might suggest.[59] What seems like Mi'kmaq stories about Kluskap could be Isabelle Googoo's very personal, local story from Cape Breton.[60]

The stories from the end of the 19th century and early 20th century reflect the Mi'kmaq's ability to integrate their memories of the past and at the same time renew themselves by incorporating their new experiences under colonization.[61] As such, they do not only display Mi'kmaq narrative elements,[62] but also European folk tales, Christian legends, historical processes, everyday jokes, and features of contemporary reserve life.

The Grand Narrative: Documenting the "tradition"

At the end of the 19th century a number of new academic disciplines emerged. Some of them focused particularly on the foreign and the exotic. Folklorists inherited the Romanticists' interest in the "*Volk*-soul" while ethnographers had the ambition to study cultures. Wilson Wallis traveled to Nova Scotia in 1911 "to obtain as complete an ethnographic account as possible."[63] He returned with his wife Ruth in 1953 in order to "discover how extensive had

---

[58] According to Ruth Finnegan (1991: 111), scholars today show "more interest in questions of artistry and individual expression than before when the stereotypes of 'communal' culture and lack of change within cultures of contexts defined as 'traditional' often precluded the apparent relevance of such questions."

[59] Some scholars use e.g. Rand's legends to complement knowledge of Mi'kmaq tradition, since it is only briefly mentioned in the 17th century literature. Hoffman (1946) uses Rand's, Hagar's, Leland's and Speck's ethnographic data from the 19th or early 20th century to complement his data on the Mi'kmaq during the 16th and 17th centuries. But Gill (1982: 36) emphasizes that "Native American world views are not simply an eternal sacred cycle of reenacting the sacred events revealed by the deities in the world's beginning. *They are open to history, to change, to threats from both within and outside the culture*" [italics added].

[60] Rand (1850: 23) mentions the differences between the Mi'kmaq dialects in the Maritimes and says that the local groups used to make fun of one other about their pronunciation: "The Indians of Cape Breton, amuse themselves occasionally at the expense of the Nova Scotians; and are themselves laughed about in turn, by the latter party, for their improper or uncouth utterances; and the Indians of Prince Edward Island and at Miramichi, are as susceptible of the ludicrous, as their brethren, and as conscious of their own superiority." Local identity is here expressed in terms of speaking the same dialects. Even today, inhabitants of different reserves mention such idiosyncracies of dialect, as when residents of Whycocomagh say that the Mi'kmaq of nearby Wagmatcook speak in a special, rapid manner.

[61] Cf. Petrone 1990: 17.

[62] A good survey of how topics and motifs in the Mi'kmaq literature are connected with traditional Algonkin stories has been compiled by Margaret Fisher (1946).

[63] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 3.

been the loss of Micmac culture in the thirty-eight-year interval, and which hardy traits had persisted; to supplement if possible, information gathered in 1911-12 regarding the old culture; to observe and assess changes in material culture and in orientation, drives, and motivations."[64] Wallis collected many stories about Kluskap from New Brunswick (Burnt Church), Nova Scotia (Pictou Landing, Truro) and from Prince Edward Island. One of his informants in Pictou Landing, John Newell, spent his first years on Cape Breton and most likely derives some of the stories from his childhood on the island. Wallis organized the Kluskap stories into four main groups: "adventures and activities predominantly aboriginal in content; animal and vegetable transformations; transformations of landscape; adventures centered on European or Christian plots and elements."[65]

The work of Wilson and Ruth Wallis provides important data to those who want to study how the stories changed during the period between 1911 and 1953. Other collectors of Kluskap stories during the first decades of the 20th century are Elsie Parsons, Truman Michelson, Frank Speck and Arthur Fauset.[66] These scholars did not edit the oral stories into well-written texts to the extent that Leland and Rand did, and they are more careful in presenting their sources for every single text. Also, the persons in the texts are more in focus; they are referred to by their names and sometimes memories of their lives are recounted. If Rand wanted to see parallels between Mi'kmaq stories and the Bible, and Leland was interested in the "Indian *Volk*-soul", Wallis' ambition was to find history in the stories. His method was to let the informants tell stories and to reconstruct ethnographic data from them.[67] The interest in documenting the "old tradition" is something he shares with his contemporary scholars. It is one of the reasons why he several decades later returns to the field to see how great "the loss of Micmac culture" had been in his absence.

---

[64] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 3pp.

[65] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 321.

[66] Parsons and Fauset collected stories in 1923 and Michelson in 1910. Some of the stories can be found in *JAFL* 1925, no. 38. Speck's collections were printed in *JAFL* 1915, no. 28. He has also collected Kluskap stories among Mi'kmaq neighbors: the Maliseet (1917) and Penobscot (1935). Speck transcribed some Kluskap stories from Sydney and Whycocomagh (Cape Breton), Parsons uses informants from Whycocomagh and Chapel Island (Cape Breton), and also from Lequille (Annapolis Royal) on the mainland. Fauset, who traveled together with Parsons, collected his data in Lequille and Michelson in Restigouche.

[67] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 7.

Wallis, Parsons, and other collectors of Mi'kmaq oral tradition have, more than Rand and Leland, tried to document the narrative context. Like Rand[68], Wallis first describes how a story is introduced, and then the interplay between the storyteller and the audience:

> The manner of telling the tales in 1911 was much the same as that described by Rand. A story was usually prefaced with *mado wiga djik ki ci gu*, 'there, at the home place, among the old people.' Auditors responded with *geskwa*, 'go on'. The introductory word, or phrase, was used only in this context. In relating the tales there was no apparent effort at rhetorical effect. The narrator proceeded as one giving information on some point in which all were interested. During the telling of a story, auditors did not interrupt with question or remark, except to grunt, now and then, as an expression of assent, or to interpose a note of surprise or of derision, or otherwise indicate interest or emotion.[69]

Unlike Wallis, however, Elsie Parsons, seems not to have participated in any larger gatherings when collecting her stories. She lets some Mi'kmaq tell a story to her, and in footnotes supplies the information that she thinks is important for the reader to know:

> Circumstances hurried the close, otherwise I think the other steps in the transformation, such as the increase in stature, would have been more detailed.[70]
> From here on the narrator felt hurried, and the meaning of this turn in the tale I lost.[71]
> Laughter here, over this comic touch.[72]
> Accompanied by a quick movement forward of the right hand. This gesture belonged in the tale, it was repeated several times in elucidating.[73]

---

[68] This is undoubtedly, as commonly in story-telling, an incipient formulation (cf. Rand 1894/1971).

[69] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 318p. Isabelle Knockwood remembers from her childhood how the storytelling could go on for days. Jokes and laughter accompanied the memories. The children were not allowed to interrupt the Elders or stand between the one who spoke and the audience. According to her, the stories were an important source of tribal knowledge for the children (Knockwood 1992: 14p.).

[70] Parsons 1925: 60, footnote 5.

[71] Parsons 1925: 64, footnote 4.

[72] Parsons 1925: 65, footnote 4.

[73] Parsons 1925: 66, footnote 1.

> This incident may be unfinished. The narrator showed some uncertainty. [74]
> Pantomime by narrator.[75]
> This touch was excessively comic to the narrator, who repeated it several times, with laugh and chuckles.[76]

In Wallis' and Parsons' stories events do not take place anywhere but in specified locales such as Richibucto or Campbellton. The important point in a story is not, for instance, that Kluskap's dog once was transformed into a stone, which misses and mourns his master, but to explain why a specific rock that can be found between Cape Breton and Pictou is named *Elmutc Ulugwetc* ("Dog Howling"). When the Mi'kmaq storyteller John Newell walks with Wallis through a forest they come to a place that to Wallis is only a "a forest's dense second growth".[77] For Newell, however, this place has a very special meaning: "Some people say there are no ghosts. I saw one here one night. I was coming home from near Glasgow where I had been hewing all day ..."[78] Another example of how the familiar landscape gives rise to memories is when Wallis strolls along a dirt road with an old Mi'kmaq and a telephone pole comes into sight: "Do you see that telephone pole up there? I was coming along here one clear night, with my gun in my hands ..."[79]

The characters in the stories can be the narrator himself, a relative, or a good friend. We can read, for instance, about Peter Ginnish from Burnt Church, who tells the scholar about his meeting with a *skadegamutc* (the ghost of a dead human), or about a friend who was hunted by one. Here are some examples of characters familiar to the storyteller:

> 'One night Francis Marble was coming up the road to Pictou Landing had just crossed the bridge at Boat Harbour ...'
> 'Yesterday, when I was in the woods cutting wood, I heard some-

[74] Parsons 1925: 69, footnote 2.
[75] Ibid., footnote 3.
[76] Ibid., footnote 4.
[77] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 372.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid.

one chopping when ever I cut ...' [80]
'My uncle, his son, and I were along the Ottawa River ...'[81]

The stories collected by Parsons on Cape Breton in 1923 also mention several named places and persons. For instance, when a Mi'kmaq meets the mythical *migumwe'su*[82], it is Jim Pictou or his sister that is involved. The meeting can occur in everyday life; thus it is Mary Newell Poulet's father that happens to meet a *migumwe'su* when he goes moose hunting with some friends at Shotigo.[83] It is Isabelle Googoo Morris' "grandfather's father", who together with six other men look for Kluskap in a cave at the mountain Smoket and becomes a target of his tricks, and it is Joe Nuelich (little Newell) who actually finds him later on.[84]

Deconstructing predecessors

In spite of the theoretical and methodological struggles of the early writers to reveal the "old tradition", modern scholars have criticized them for their way of collecting data and particularly for failing to contextualize the stories in their narrative situation. For example, instead of being addressed to a group of Mi'kmaq, the stories recorded were told to the lone researcher. The original stories were woven into a context that elicited additions and evoked emotions.[85] Since the oral story was performed in relation to an audience familiar with the motifs and characters, there is also an unspoken subtext. This important information is lost for the scholar, who remains the perpetual "outsider". This situation could be compared with that of a stranger joining a gathering around a family photo album. Within the family there is no need to introduce persons, places, or events, as when the photos are shown to a stranger. The memories within the family are collectively and cumulatively constructed and represent a different kind of knowledge than the reduced and descriptive text presented to an outsider. A joke about a person will be incomprehensible if the listener does not know anything about the character or habits of this person. Furthermore, the narrators are continuously reminded of the constraints

[80] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 373.
[81] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 374.
[82] Wallis & Wallis (1955: 155) spell it *migamawesu*. These beings, who lived in the woods, were well-dressed, beautiful, and charming. Men only met female, women only male forms of these figures. Rand (1894/1971: 73) spells it *megumoowesoo* and adds that they were skilled flute players.
[83] Parsons 1925: 95.
[84] Parsons 1925: 87.
[85] Harrod 2000: 21, cf. Petrone 1990.

of this narrative situation, since the "outsider" has forced upon them a specific way of telling the story. They were compelled to distance themselves from the text, since the presence of the ethnographer made them aware that some details demanded explanations. Parsons gives some evidence of the difficulties. When one of her informants was going to tell a story about Kluskap's Grandmother and Little Marten, he hesitated: "There was more to this part of the story, he said, but he could not translate, it was too hard. He was unaware that I had heard from others the stories about Marten and Gluskap's grandmother, etc., and his reserve was an illustration of the common experience of a narrator who feels that he can not get across a point of view so alien to his listener's."[86]

The harshest critique from scholars of today, however, concerns the concept of culture.[87] Many of the early ethnographers were fascinated by the idea of fathoming the pre-Columbian culture, but were oblivious of two things. First, cultures always undergo changes, which in the case of the Mi'kmaq means that their history did not start with the arrival of Columbus.[88] Today the notion of an essence in culture has generally been abandoned. To depict an indigenous culture before colonization as "original" has had the effect of depriving the indigenous people of their history. Secondly, the transcriptions do not occur in an historical vacuum but can reflect a turbulent period in a group's history.

Wallis demonstrates his essentialistic view of culture when he deliberately sorts out stories that show European influence. By removing such stories he

---

[86] Parsons 1925: 89-90 footnote 4.

[87] A classic work is R. Wagner's (1975) *The Invention of Culture.* His main thesis is that culture is more the result of a negotiation than a reflection of an objective reality (cf. Crapanzano 1980, Friedman 1994).

[88] Gill (1982: 9) is one of many scholars who have criticized the view of indigenous culture as timeless, ahistorical, and unchanging: "We tend to judge how 'real' a Native American is on the basis of how close he or she comes to our image, which projects back to precontact times." In the same way as the tendency to define a Hawaiian as a "pre-Cook-Hawaiian" (Friedman 1994: 126pp.), there is the notion of a "pre-Europe-Mi'kmaq". Primitiveness and an unchangeable tradition were ascribed not only to Native American but also to African cultures. Rosaldo wants to abandon this static, essentialistic concept of culture. He emphasizes that the interaction between ideas, events, and institutions occurs over time: "from a processual perspective, change rather than structure becomes society's enduring state, and time rather than space becomes its most encompassing medium" (1993: 103). He criticizes the classic study of the Nuer by Evans-Pritchard, using it as an example of a static and uniform description of culture. In spite of the hard pressure that the British colonial government exerted on the Nuer while Evans-Pritchard was doing his fieldwork, these conditions are hardly noticeable in the text (1993: 43). Hans Medick (1987: 76) refers to the criticism from Cohn (1980) of such an ahistorical view among the early ethnographers: "The anthropologist searches for the elders with the richest memories of days gone by, assiduously records their ethnographic texts, and then puts together between the covers of their monographs a picture of the lives of the natives of Anthropologyland."

wants to distill the "traditional" Mi'kmaq culture. Since Wallis looked for bygone days in his search for this traditional culture, he mostly worked with older informants. But one of the informants was a man in his thirties, Thomas Meuse, depicted by Wallis as a skilled storyteller.[89] While two of the older informants resided in Burnt Church and Pictou Landing, respectively, Meuse is portrayed as a widely traveled person. He had no permanent job but roamed through the province, spending a lot of time telling and listening to stories. Meuse's talent in telling stories, combined with his mobile life, exemplifies how local stories may have circulated. Not only were his own stories retold and reformulated by others in new contexts, he also picked up new stories and made them his own. Interestingly it was Meuse who contributed most of the stories containing European elements. One of these stories, which extensively mingled Mi'kmaq and European motifs is only mentioned in Wallis' monograph and testifies that Meuse in one sweep could recount a 3,500 word story.[90]

If it is not possible to reconstruct the original state of a culture, Wallis' ambition to find the "traditional" Mi'kmaq culture must be regarded as futile. When Mi'kmaq oral tradition was transcribed in the middle of the 19th century, the life of the group had been drastically changed.[91]

Stories for the Public

It was not only the Romanticists' fascination with other cultures that created popular epos like the one about *Hiawata* or thrilling novels such as *The Last of the Mohicans*. A new kind of literature was born from the urban citizen's interest in the wilderness, hunting, fishing, and tourism. In these "documentary" depictions, the "Indian" played an important role. The loss of

---

[89] Wallis says that some Mi'kmaq had the reputation of being good storytellers but that no one on the reserves had a monopoly on telling stories. He had the impression that men were more skilled than women, but adds that the reason could be his few contacts with Mi'kmaq women. There is nothing that seems to indicate that narration should have been reserved for men. For instance, Rand says that five of his informants were women. Mi'kmaq women were then very shy in front of strangers, something that Wallis also stressed in his monograph. As a woman, Elsie Parsons had the benefit of moving more freely among women, and her informants and storytellers were in fact mostly women (Parsons 1925: 55).

[90] Wallis (1955: 319) gives excuses for his edition of the stories: "Since even the most generous of publishers imposes limitations of space, stories most obviously European in origin are not included here. One of Tom Meuse's most elaborate productions in the genre, about a personage called Epitoplapesi, is a 3 500-word amalgam of the King of the Fishes, the Extraordinary Companions, and the Marooned Rescuer – told without pause."

[91] On the conflict over the land between the English and the Mi'kmaq, see Upton (1979), York (1989), and Whitehead (1991).

their land and the inability to be self-sufficient had created among the Mi'kmaq a dependency on gifts, distributed by the government. The resources were too scarce to subsist on, however, and in order to survive the Mi'kmaq tried to earn some income on the margins of the mainstream economy. They took temporary jobs on White farms or plaited baskets for sale. A quite profitable job was to work as guides on hunting expeditions or in the growing tourist business in the province.[92] The Mi'kmaq experience of nature and skill in finding tracks and game in the forests impressed tourists and White hunters. It also raised an interest in the inner world of these "children of nature". One of them, Lieutenant Arthur Gordon, took the opportunity to write down some of the stories that he said he had heard around the campfires, some of which were about Kluskap. His notes were printed in 1864 as "Wilderness Journeys in New Brunswick", in *Vacation Tourists and Notes of Travel in 1862-3*.[93] This text probably is the source of other texts about Kluskap that were later published in a handbook for tourists, *Maritime Provinces* (1883), aiming to attract tourists to the province.[94] When Leland describes the farewell of Kluskap, he gives *Maritime Provinces* as the source of his text and adds that the author is unknown but that the text originates from the Mi'kmaq. He probably did not know that it was told to Gordon and his fellow hunters by Gabe Acquin, who was a very trusted guide and hunting leader. Acquin was not a Mi'kmaq but a Maliseet and by that time a real "globe-trotter". Besides guiding relatives of the English King, he had traveled to Europe to hunt with the upper classes.[95]

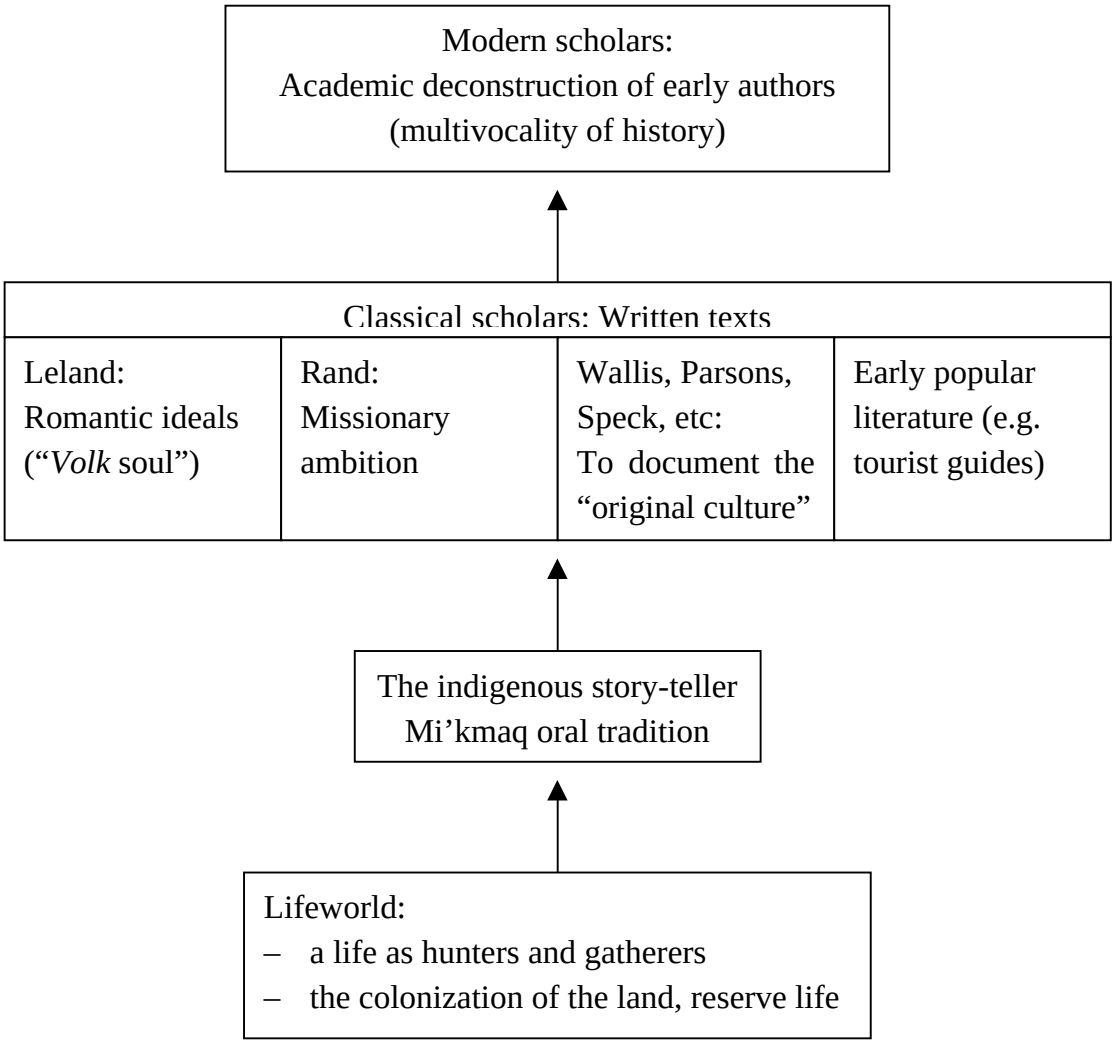
Kluskap is still used as an attraction for tourists in the guidebooks of Nova Scotia. One of the main tourist routes has his name, the Glooscap Trail. The romantic image of a Mi'kmaq culture hero, intertwined with nature mysticism, is still an efficient way to attract people to the province and is clearly expressed in a 1996 tourist book about Nova Scotia:

> The name Glooscap Trail speaks of ancient legends and mysteries born of nature's beauty ... Mi'kmaq legends tell of the mighty

[92] Prins 1996: 178.
[93] Upton 1979: 130, 215, footnote 20.
[94] Parkhill 1997: 44pp.
[95] Parkhill 1997: 46.

Glooscap who created Five Islands and controlled the great tides with his magic.[96]

Different layers in and readings of early Kluskap stories (approx. 1850–1930)



[96] *Nova Scotia. The Doer's and Dreamer's Complete Guide* 1996: 80.

The little stories and their embeddedness in the local life-world

Although the early Kluskap stories are imbued with Romantic ideas, it is still possible to reveal how the Mi'kmaq experienced the world they inhabited.[97] From the stories the readers may learn how the Mi'kmaq make bows and arrows, an eel spear, or a pair of snowshoes. Here is a description of how a man makes a fire:

> A woman says to her husband, 'If you get dry wood, make hard sticks, put one of these in a piece of wood, and turn it, fire will soon come.' The old man decides to try. He takes a dry, hard limb from a tree, and twirls and twirls it. After a while, he feels it. He twirls it very rapidly, faster and faster, until smoke comes. He twirls it some more, and fire comes. The twirled stick was beech; the trough, birch; punk was placed in the hole; and the twirling was done by the unaided hands.[98]

In this chapter I shall give more examples of Mi'kmaq's "little" stories that can be discerned in the Grand stories of the classical scholars. They reflect the life of these hunters as well as their experience of the colonial situation. I start with the Mi'kmaq relationship to their landscape, derived from their experiences as hunters. I continue with other stories illustrating Mi'kmaq ways of narrating the colonial encounter.

Megâmaage[99] – *Home of the Mi'kmaq*

The Mi'kmaq interpretation of the landscape evident in their stories reflects a way of encountering the world not from an objective distance but with the view of an insider.[100] But even in the edited, Romantic versions there are

---

[97] Prins 1996: 13: "With careful examination and analysis of the documents, it is possible to extract basic elements of historical truth and reconstruct a narrative that makes sense of the Mi'kmaqs' journey through the centuries to the present."

[98] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 396.

[99] *Megâmaage* means "home of the Micmacs, or the true man" or "Land of the Micmacs" (Rand 1919: 45).

[100] Cf. Merchant (1989: 46): "Indians were not subjects detached from objects of observation, but active communicants in a web of consciousness." To reflect (like the Romanticists) about nature would imply a distance from the only lifeworld they knew, i.e. that their environment and familiar places would become objects, separated from the speaking and feeling subject. Calvin Martin's observations on modern Yupiit and their way of perceiving nature (1999: 136) suggest an unwillingness to distance themselves from the world

occasions when a local world can be discerned beneath the strict composition. One example is when Benjamin Brooks tells Rand about a Mi'kmaq family with the name Mooin (Bear). Brooks remembers that when he wanted to know more about this family name, the explanation offered him assumed the form of a story: *A child nourished by a bear.* Instead of just recounting it as an exciting story, Rand adds this information, allowing the reader to imagine the local context in which it belongs.[101] In this way, the reader gets an indication of the extent to which Rand's corpus of depersonalized folktales originally were more embedded in local lifeworlds with named places and persons.

The nomadic life generated an intimate knowledge of places and Wallis was especially fascinated by how people could memorize complete maps of the landscape. The informant Peter Ginnish could cover a distance of 600 miles and 305 place names to remember:

> The route Ginnish described was from the tip of the Gaspé Peninsula to the end of its south shore at Restigouche; along the opposite shore of the Baie des Chaleurs to Point Miscou, and southward along the Gulf of St. Lawrence to Miramichi Bay; up to the Miramichi River to Red Bank, and back along the opposite bank to the Gulf; down the coast to the Richibucto River, and then up and down that stream; finally from the mouth of the Richibucto along the coast to Shediac Bay at the Isthmus of Chignecto, which joins New Brunswick to Nova Scotia. In relating the features of this land, Ginnish started from Red Bank on the north bank of the Miramichi, and proceeded toward the bay on which he lived and from there north to Point Miscou; this is 60 per cent of the entire account. He then began inland on the other bank of the Miramichi and moved down the coast. Finally he returned north to Point Miscou and went around the Baie des Chaleurs, and then to Gaspé; the two hundred miles from Restigouche to Gaspé, the point farthest from Burnt Church, had the briefest treatment.[102]

The traditional mode of subsistence had also generated a detailed knowledge of different animal species. Evidence of this can be found both in the early historical sources and in the ethnographic data from the end of the 19th and

---

that surrounds them. They "don't talk about environmentalism, conservation, a land ethic, or affection for or awe of nature (unless they have been westernized): in fact, it's very rare for them to talk about nature at all." Cf. Relph 1976: 55.

[101] Rand 1894/1971: 259pp., cf. Wallis & Wallis 1955: 431.

[102] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 102.

beginning of the 20th century. In a footnote to *The whales and the robbers*, Rand adds that this Mi'kmaq story had taught him a great deal about the province's natural history:

> (1) The whales, so says Nancy Jeddore, often, and especially when struck with a harpoon and in the agonies of death, utter sounds that resemble the sound of a wind instrument with a great variety of intonations, very musical and delightful to hear. (2) The fish-hawk will not eat fish that has fallen out of his claws. He will not take any that are dead, though they lie in plenty on the shore. (3) There are three kinds of loons. The largest kind inhabits the fresh-water lakes. This is called in Micmac *Coospemeawach*. It is this that makes such a doleful, dismal howl. It is a very handsome bird, spotted, and having a bluish-black neck and head. (4) All the birds that feed on fish and flesh have the faculty of disgorging themselves at will. The paunch is a long sack. They swallow bones and all, and when the flesh is digested, throw up the bones. A crow or an owl will do the same thing. An owl will swallow the legbone of a rabbit; this cannot pass the small intestines, and so after the flesh has been dissolved in the stomach, the bone is disgorged as well as the fur. There is a bird of the gull kind that will swallow a mackerel, and then be unable to fly. If alarmed, it will disgorge the fish and fly.[103]

Rand noted how Mi'kmaq observations of nature were indirectly intertwined with their stories. Mi'kmaq oral tradition emanated from practical knowledge of the surrounding environment. In the story about *Pules, pulowech, and beechkwech* (*pigeon, partridge, and nighthawk*) Rand sees a kind of "allegory of natural history". This "allegory" starts with a description of how the different birds construct their *wigwams*. They build and locate their nests each in its own peculiar way, following the procedure they use in nature:

> Away in the depths of the forest were three families, − the Pigeons, the Partridges, and the Nighthawks. 'Come on,' said they one day to one another, 'let us see which will build the finest wigwam.' So the Pigeon went to work and erected a high one, not very tight, but built with wicker-work, and made airy and spacious. The Partridge thought she would make hers more lowly, and so kept very near to

[103] Rand 1894/1971: 416.

> the ground, and made her habitation so low and so much like the trees and leaves around that an enemy and even a friend might pass without seeing it. Mrs. Nighthawk took less pains than any of the others, and made no hut at all.[104]

Rand's comments clarify how the story reflects Mi'kmaq observations about the patterns that the different birds followed when they made their nests:

> First, the creation of wigwams: the pigeon builds on trees, but merely crosses a few sticks, and takes no pains to make the nest warm and soft, as do the other birds; the partridge gathers a few leaves, and sits among them, her back looking very much like leaves, − so that a passer-by would hardly notice her as she sits there; the nighthawk lays her eggs on the ground without any nest, and selects a piece of burnt land, because her back most resembles that.[105]

The ways in which the birds make their nests are, like the Mi'kmaq's *wigwam*, examples of different ways of "dwelling". The story differs from a Western tradition (from Aesop's fables to modern cartoons), in which human characteristics are projected onto animals. In the fables, morality and culture are understood as something unique to humans, but humoristically attributed to nature. In Mi'kmaq stories, however, the different animals' ways of building houses are not metaphorical representations of human behavior. They are not stories about anthropomorphized animals as in Western fables allegorically depicting human society.[106] If we want to know about a duck's life, we should not read Donald Duck. For a Westerner, it is important to distinguish between genres like fables, fairy tales, children's cartoons, and books in natural history. But Mi'kmaq narratives are both fiction and fact. They are fiction because they have a narrative structure, but also contain facts, stemming from daily observations of animal behavior. In other words, they are stories about the real life of animals given narrative form. In these stories the Mi'kmaq relate to animals as to sentient beings, i.e. persons. Both animals and humans are "persons", and as persons they all share dwelling-in-the-world, but they dwell in different ways. Animals, like humans, have lifeworlds. The story

[104] Rand 1894/1971: 389.
[105] Rand 1894/1971: 394p. His informant, Nancy Jeddore, gave this explanation and elucidation of the legend to Rand.
[106] Cf. Ingold 2000: 92.

above depicts how three different "bird-persons" dwell. To explain Mi'kmaq stories of animals as metaphors for human life is, at best, a Western misinterpretation.[107] At worst it arrogantly attributes to another people a failed epistemology:[108]

> We tell ourselves reassuringly that this view the hunters have, of sharing with animals as they would with people, however appealing it might be, does not correspond with what actually happens. For nature, we say, does not *really* share with man. When hunters assert the contrary it is because the image of sharing is so deeply ingrained in their thought that they can no longer tell the metaphor from the reality. But *we* can, and we insist − on these grounds − that the hunters have got it wrong.[109]

In Mi'kmaq stories the animals are important "conversation partners" to humans. Wallis writes that the Mi'kmaq draw parallels between animal and human societies,[110] and in Rand's legends a loon can tell a girl that he has been "in his own native town".[111] Humans can also establish alliances with animals in different ways. *The Loon Magician*,[112] in which a girl marries a loon (*Kweemoo*), at a deeper level shows how humans, with the help of animals, can attain powerful knowledge.[113] The story tells of a loon which initiates a pair of siblings into its special powers. The cry of the loon summons the girl, who uses a special dress that her brother had made to answer the call. She addresses the loon as *Nikskamich* (Grandfather), an epithet that indicates both kinship and veneration. The loon becomes the spiritual guardian of the siblings and saves them and their parents from dangerous enemies. He also becomes their master in teaching them how to use special powers. The brother is taught to be a *buoin*, a powerful Mi'kmaq, and to run fast, walk on water,

---

[107] Ingold 1994: 19, Bird-David 1992a.
[108] Cf. Bird-David 1999: 79.
[109] Ingold 1994: 19.
[110] The Mi'kmaq's proclivity to draw parallels between human and animal societies was documented as early as in the 17th century by Le Clercq (1691/1968: 277).
[111] Rand 1894/1971: 382.
[112] Rand 1894/1971: 378-382.
[113] The loon was a powerful bird, since it had connections with Kluskap. When Kluskap visits a village of Indians on Newfoundland, these Indian friends are called Kwemoo (Loons). As friends of Kluskap, they are sometimes people, sometimes real loons (Rand 1894/1971: 280-289). The loons have a chief (master of the loons) with whom Kluskap can talk. The cry of the loon was thought of by the Mi'kmaq as the bird's calling upon Kluskap.

and fly, skills that are important in order to become a successful hunter. The sister becomes loon's bride and as a wedding gift receives "a beautiful little plaything, speckled like a turkey's egg". The girl's mother advises her to put it gently in a "bag of feathers". Rand explains this gift thus: "This is poetry. This egg plaything, so precious and needing to be handled with such tenderness and care, is a babe, a little loon."[114] With this interpretation the gift is a confirmation and fulfillment of the marriage, a child. But if the story at another level could be read as how a woman gains power (*buoin*), through an important alliance with the powerful loon, then the marriage and the egg must be given a deeper and more symbolic meaning. The egg becomes a metonym for the loon, and by owning a part of the bird, the woman gets into contact with and derives power from a greater whole, a spiritual guardian. The bag in which the egg should be kept is probably a medicine bundle. Just as an egg has its correct place in a feathered nest, the powerful object has its place in a medicine bundle. Lescarbot writes in the beginning of the 17th century that the Chief Membertou, who also was an *aoutmoin*[115], "carrieth hanged at his neck the mark of this profession, which is a purse triangle-wise, covered with their embroidery-work, that is to say with matachias, within which there is I know not what as big as a small nut, which he saith to be his devil called Aoutem …"[116]

Thanks to Le Clercq, posterity has learned in detail what was in the medicine bundle of a *buoin*, since one of them gave his belongings to the missionary as an ultimate proof of his will to be christened. Le Clercq opened the bag with great curiosity and found amongst other things the man's *oüahich*[117], "which was a stone of the size of a nut wrapped in a box, which he called the house of his Devil."[118] Le Clercq recounts how sick Mi'kmaq could be cured by the *buoin*: "the sick person who asks recovery of the juggler, and who implores him to obtain this from his Oühaiche, speaking to him these words, *Emkadoui*, as if he were to say, 'Lend me thy Devil'. The juggler answers him, 'If thou wishest that I employ him in thy service ... "[119] The gift from the loon to the girl is power, and as a counter gift and confirmation of the alliance she saves her spiritual guardian's life by hiding him from some hunters. From

[114] Rand 1894/1971: 380.
[115] The Jesuit Biard spells the word *autmoin*.
[116] Lescarbot 1609/1928: 177-178.
[117] Le Clercq's spelling of the word varies: *oüahich/oüahiche*.
[118] Le Clercq 1691/1968: 222.
[119] Le Clercq 1691/1968: 218.

Lescarbot's description of how the hunt was prepared among the Mi'kmaq, we can imagine that the collaboration between the spiritual guardian and *buoin* was of great importance for the success of a hunting expedition: "when the savages be a-hungered they consult with Membertou's oracle, and he saith unto them: '*Go ye to such a place and you shall find game*'."[120]

The Mi'kmaq even derived the inspiration for their songs from the animals. One way of learning songs was from birds. The words in the songs were not given any lexical meaning but only served as expressions of the particular bird species that sang them. A turkey or a wild goose could be given as examples of sources of inspiration. Wallis' informant Newell said that a man had observed that seagulls often flew together when they heralded a storm and sang "ka'ni! ka'ni! ka'niak! ka'niak! ka'niak!" three times. The man was inspired by these bird cries and composed a song. The listeners were encouraged to dance to the song, while the singer beat time with a cane. During the singing the composer came to think of a woman who was hunting. This inspired him to add words about this in the song.

Another Mi'kmaq derived his inspiration for a song when he heard an owl hooting in the forest:

> He was camping in the woods. The owl smelled the fire and came close to it. After a while he heard someone singing 'ru! ru! ru! ru! ru! ru! ru! hua'wa! hua'wa!' finishing with 'hi'a! hi'a! hi'a!' Soon another owl sang; then another. The owl commenced with high notes, in a very sweet voice, and ended with 'hu'a!' a deep guttural. It sounded as though he was choking. After this, three or four sang in chorus, the refrain of one answering the syllables of the other.[121]

When the man had learned the song, he let it be his *ne'skaw'et* (song of greeting).

The Mi'kmaq also knew where the different trees, plants, and herbs were growing. They had special names for them and knew how to use them.[122] The early sources from the 17th century describe how the Mi'kmaq with their herbal knowledge were good at healing people with medicinal plants. The missionary Le Clercq writes: "They have, moreover, a quantity of roots and herbs which are unknown to us in Europe, but whose virtues and properties

---

[120] Lescarbot 1609/1928: 174.

[121] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 119.

[122] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 119. Cf. Hagar (1896) and Lacey (1977).

the Indians know wonderfully well, so that they can make use of them in time of need."[123] Some plants were furthermore ascribed suprahuman qualities and could only be found under special conditions. One of these mythical plants was *mededeskooï*, "the rattling plant". It had received its name because of three leaves constantly beating each other and causing a sound reminiscent of a rattlesnake. Used in a correct way, certain parts of the plant could cure diseases and carry out wishes.[124]

It was thus not only motifs about animal life that were recounted in the stories, but even the whole landscape could play a significant role. Although the Mi'kmaq were in the painful process of being forced to settle down on reserves, memories from the "old home" remained and landscapes outside the reserves were still of great importance for them. The government rations of necessities were meager and their diet was therefore supplemented with meat, fish, and berries from the surroundings. We can imagine that the patterns of the landscape and memories of nomadic life were one way of preserving identity and knowing not only your place in space but also where you belonged existentially. The stories were thus not primarily a way of mapping the territory. To be engaged in the stories the audience would already have to be familiar with their ingredients. The stories rather conveyed the deeper meanings of the landscape.[125] In this Kluskap played a central role. A long time ago he had transformed the landscape and left memories of his travels. A comparison between hunters and settlers suggests that whereas the former sees cosmological structures in an already given landscape, the latter tend to create them in the landscapes that they are building themselves.[126] It was thus in the landscape that the Mi'kmaq could still find Kluskap. At the end of the century, some of them could even tell of persons who had met or visited him in his *wigwam*.

Transforming the landscape through a beaver hunt

The valleys, mountains, and shores of Nova Scotia have been explained in one way by the scientifically minded geographer and in a completely different way by the inhabitants who dwelled in those places in the 19th century. To read the stories about the adventures of Kluskap in Mi'kmaq-land is like traveling in the Canadian coastal provinces. Place names and spectacular,

[123] Le Clercq 1698/1928: 298.
[124] Hagar 1896: 175p.
[125] Ingold 1996: 143.
[126] Ingold 2000: 56.

natural features in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland here get their special, ethno-geographical explanations. Specific places are connected to each other in meaningful patterns conceived by Kluskap. The same motifs are found in different stories all over Nova Scotia, but there are variations depending on the particular, local contexts. Kluskap thus has more than one home and his petrified dogs can be found in many places in the province.

The connections to Kluskap and his deeds tend to disappear, however, when Mi'kmaq place names are substituted with English names. Thus Minas Basin is likened to a huge beaver pond with its opening at Cape Split. The Mi'kmaq named Cape Split *Pleegum*, which is the opening made in the beaver dam to let water pass.[127] Thanks to Kluskap, who opened the dam, ships can still pass today. The Mi'kmaq thus had their explanation as to why the valley of Annapolis and Cornwallis, in their view formerly inundated, had been drained by the opening at Cape Split and Annapolis Gut. Aylesford swamp is described as a big lake with a huge beaver lodge, which explains the Mi'kmaq name *Cobeetek*, the home of the beaver. Kluskap chases a little beaver from this beaver lodge all the way to Bras d'Or Lake in Cape Breton.[128] There it tries to hide in another lodge, but is killed by Kluskap, who turns the lodge upside down and transforms it into an island. When he opens another beaver lodge at Cape Chignecto a piece of land floats away. From this piece he creates a moose, which he lets his dogs chase. As a treat they get food from the dead moose (probably the entrails). Large pieces of this dog food are transformed into stones, "and remain there to this day; the place is called Oopunk".[129] Oopunk is Mi'kmaq for "the lights (lungs)".[130] The hunt ends when Kluskap transforms the moose into an island, Isle of Holt.[131]

It is not only when hunting animals that Kluskap travels and transforms the landscape. In one of Rand's legends, *A wizard carries off Glooscap's*

---

[127] Rand 1894/1971: xliv; cf. his different spelling (1919: 69): *pleegun.*

[128] Fisher (1946: 238) writes that the motif "hero chases a beaver which gets away" is widely spread among the Mi'kmaq, Passamaquoddy, Maliseet, Ojibwa and Menomini. In Leland's version (1884: 62-64) *Of the Great Works which Glooscap made in the Land*, this story is said to have been collected from the Mi'kmaq, Passamaquoddy, and Penobscot. Judging from the place names, this version most probably has its origin in Mi'kmaq tradition.

[129] Rand 1894/1971: 293.

[130] Rand 1919: 63.

[131] Rand 1894/1971: 236. Parts of this story are repeated further on, but then the island is named Isle of Hant (p. 293), cf. Parsons (1925: 38). The island is not mentioned in Rand's dictionary of place names. One guess is that the island might be Ile Haute, located outside Cape Chignecto, since it is the soil floating away from this cape that Kluskap transforms into a moose.

housekeeper, Grandmother is stolen away and Kluskap travels all around the province searching for her.[132] With the help of some whales, he goes to Cape Breton (*Oonumage*)[133] by the Strait of Canso and arrives at Cape North (*Uktutun*)[134], only to find that the one he is looking for has been brought to Newfoundland (*Uktukamkw*).[135] After a while he returns to Nova Scotia and is stranded with his whales in Pictou (*Piktook*).[136] His travels then continue to Partridge Island, Cape Blomidon, and Spenser's (Spencer's) Island. On Spenser's Island Kluskap had good luck in hunting. He cuts the meat from the prey in pieces to be dried, a common Mi'kmaq practice. He then puts the left-over bones in a large kettle and boils them, in order to get the coveted marrow. When the food is ready and there is no more use for the kettle, he turns it upside down so that it becomes an island. The Mi'kmaq call this island *Ooteomul*, which means "his kettle", i.e. Kluskap's kettle.[137] Kluskap then remains over the winter near Cape d'Or. To make it easier for people to travel between Partridge Island and Cumberland Bay he makes a passage to walk on, *Awokun*.[138]

Since Kluskap often traveled with his dogs as his companions, there are traces in the landscape of them and their adventures. The Isle of Hant[139] with its rocks, as earlier mentioned, was the result of Kluskap's and his dogs' moose hunt. The moose managed to escape by fleeing out into the water. The dogs, deprived of their prey, sat down on the shore and started to howl loudly. Kluskap then transformed the moose into an island and the dogs to rocks, which from now on had to watch over their prey out in the ocean.[140] Another motif that involves the transformation of dogs into stones is connected to the

---

[132] Rand 1894/1971: 284-293.

[133] The spelling varies; *Onumage* in Rand (1919: 61).

[134] Rand says (1919: 81) that the local name for Cape North is *Uktutun*, "highest mountain".

[135] *Uktakum*, Rand says (1919: 80), is "a large body of land". The name for Newfoundland varies: *Uktâkâmkok*, *Uktâkumkook* ("The smaller continent" or "The mainland"), *Uktâkumook* ("The mainland, as seen and distinguished from an island"), *Uktamkook* ("The little continent"). One reason for the variation could be that Rand's dictionary of place names is an edited collection and the names vary in his different manuscripts. The variations in names could also in part be due to different informants having their own local name for the place.

[136] *Piktook* means "An air explosion" (Rand 1919: 68).

[137] According to Rand's *A First Reading Book in the Mi'kmaq Language* (1875) another Mi'kmaq name for Spencer's Island is *Wochuk* – a small kettle (p. 100).

[138] Rand 1894/1971: 292. Rand (1919: 17) says that the name for Parrsboro in Nova Scotia is *Awokun*, which means "a portage, a short cut, over the boar's back"; cf. Rand (1875: 96) on *Owokun* – a crossing-over place.

[139] Isle of Holt is probably Isle of Hant (Rand 1894/1971: 236, cf. p. 293).

[140] Rand 1894/1971: 293.

departure of Kluskap. When Kluskap left the land of the Mi'kmaq to travel to a distant and unknown place in the West, the dogs were left behind as grieving rocks, which will return to life when their master returns.[141] On the shore between Cape Breton and Pictou there is thus a rock dog, mourning his master Kluskap. The rock also bears its name after this event, *Elmutc Ulugwetc* (the howling dog).

Other remains of Kluskap's travels in the landscape were peculiar stones. Wallis recounts how one of his informants, John Newell, had found one of Kluskap's "souvenirs", a stone that looked like a partridge egg. Newell showed the stone to Wallis in 1911 and said that Kluskap had left it at the shore on Merigomish Island. The stone was thought to give its owner *keskamzit*, good fortune. Another stone looked like a collarbone, and Wallis was told that it had been placed in a tree by Kluskap.[142]

The above examples show how places and natural forms were incorporated into Mi'kmaq stories. Beaver hunts, dogs and left-overs from a dinner were metaphors, used by the traditional hunter to talk about the landscape. A modern reader might wonder if the Mi'kmaq really believed in these things, but this would not be an adequate way of approaching the stories. Here we are encountering a classificatory system that does not correspond to our way of viewing a landscape. It was not until I walked along the shore at Minas Basin that I could grasp some of those metaphors and points of reference that this special landscape could evoke. The area is full of spectacular stone formations and minerals,[143] and it has the highest tide difference in the world. When the Mi'kmaq spoke about their landscape they referred to objects or events that they were acquainted with from within their lifeworld. Such reference points could be food, artefacts (canoes, *wigwams*), animals (dogs, moose, beavers), relatives (Grandmother) or subsistence practices (hunting). Where a Westerner would speak about fossils and the Ice Age, the Mi'kmaq thus spoke about left-overs and Kluskap. Kluskap does not create the landscape, but transforms it by moving, hunting, and eating. When a story recounts how Kluskap ate moose entrails and then petrified the remains, it reminds me of a huge, flat stone I saw on the shore at Five Islands.[144] Wind and water had

---

[141] Roth, quoted in Wallis & Wallis 1955: 337. Cf. Wallis & Wallis 1955: 333.

[142] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 166.

[143] Minerals on Partridge Island include amethyst, agate, jasper, opal, calcite and apatite; at Cape d'Or are found obsidian, gold and copper, on Spencer's Island quartz and crystals, and at Five Islands moss agate and marble.

[144] Five Islands was talked about as the body of a moose (Rand 1875: 83).

carved it in a specific way, and I could see how its color and form could be likened with those of an enormous lung. There are also a lot of fossils in the Minas Basin area.[145] When I visited the Nova Scotia museum there was a gray stone, full of shell fossils, in the gift shop. It looked like a shell midden, as if someone had eaten dinner and left shells from clams, mussels, and scallops on the stone.[146] A gray stone could, if it was split, contain amazingly beautiful, blue crystals, perhaps suggesting the notion of Kluskap's egg. Beautiful purple amethysts at Cape Breton were spoken about as Kluskap's beads.[147]

It is not a coincidence that the beaver hunt is chosen as a metaphor for transforming the landscape. The beaver was the animal that most radically affected the environment in Nova Scotia. Breaking beaver dams was literally a way of transforming the landscape. When the giant beaver in retaliation builds a dam across from Blomidon to the Cumberland side, Kluskap's medicine garden is destroyed. The great difference between high and low tide in the Minas Basin could be likened to the effects of a huge beaver dam being broken and rebuilt every day. Since the Mi'kmaq were used to hunting beaver it was a natural metaphor to employ in their narratives. It does not imply that this was what they actually believed. It was a way of talking about the landscape, where natural features and events were transformed into signs variously organized into a larger symbolic representation of the environment.[148]

---

[145] At the Fundy Geological Museum in Parrsboro there is a collection of fossils (including some from dinosaurs) and precious minerals.

[146] It is probably fossils at Baie des Chaleurs that John Newell refers to in a story about Kluskap: "At Caraquet, you can see in the rock the bones and head of a fish that Gluskap ate" (Wallis & Wallis 1955: 330).

[147] Dennis 1934: 109. One of Rand's Mi'kmaq friends, Thomas Boonis, in broken English emphasized his assertion that "Glooscap, he makum all dese pretty stones" (Rand 1894/1971: 291). The stones were the precious minerals on Cape Blomidon. According to Boonis, Kluskap made them to adorn his old female companion (Grandmother). Rand commented Boonis' assertion with: "I allowed the worthy man to enjoy his own opinions without let or hindrance from me …" (ibid.).

[148] An intriguing aspect of the motif of the giant beaver is that this creature actually existed during the Ice Age in both North America and Europe. In North America it is named *Castoroides ohioensis* after the place (Ohio) where paleontologists first found fossil evidence of it in the 19th century. Its remains have been found from New York to Nebraska and Texas, and from Florida to Yukon and Alaska. The giant beaver seems to have been about 2.5 meters and weighed 150-200 kilos (like the size of a black bear). The finds are more than 10,000 years old and perhaps as much as 120,000 years. According to Richard Morlan, Curator in Paleoenvironmental Studies at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Hull (Quebec), no fossils have been found in the Atlantic Provinces and New England, but that does not mean there were no giant beavers there. Although the Mi'kmaq never saw a giant beaver they could, speculates Morland, in trading westward and southward have come into contact with giant beaver bones. The Gwitchin people of Old Crow, Yukon Territory, have traditional stories about a giant beaver, which, according to Morlan, may have emanated from their observations of Castoroides bones that occur commonly in the area. (Personal communication from Richard Morlan.)

Grandmother

In the 19th century Cape Blomidon was still called *Glooscapweek* by the Mi'kmaq, which means the home of Kluskap. There are, according to Rand's *Legends of the Micmacs*, two places in Nova Scotia that were called "Grandmother's Place" (*Cookumijenawanak*), since in the stories they were associated with the old woman who took care of Kluskap's *wigwam*. In *Legends of the Micmacs* Rand localizes only one of the two places, at the spot where Grand Lake merges with the Shubenacadie River. Here was a rock, big enough for two men to stand on in the middle of the river. The fishing was said to be extremely rewarding at this place.[149] In the same collection there is another story that describes how the old woman was transformed into a mountain, which could still be seen during Rand's lifetime. After the woman was petrified Kluskap sets out for an island in the West, but before he goes promises that he will find a new home for the woman and Little Marten.[150] The name and exact location of the mountain is missing in Rand's account, but since the events in the story take place at Cape d'Or it seems likely that the rock would be found in Minas Basin.[151]

In an edition of Rand's notes about Mi'kmaq place names there is mention of another rock that is connected with the old woman. This is a place on Cape Breton that the English called Cape Dolphin, known to the Mi'kmaq as *Kookoomijenawanak*, "Our Grandmother", after a particular rock.[152] There is still today a rock at the entrance to Kluskap's Cave at Kelly's Mountain, probably the one that Rand was referring to. The contour of the rock is reminiscent of a woman's face in profile. It is even today called "Grandmother" by the Mi'kmaq.

Stories about the petrified Grandmother contain motifs that were spread among the Algonkin groups, but were dressed in local clothes when embedded in the Mi'kmaq lifeworld.[153] The personified landscape talked to the Mi'kmaq about Grandmother, dogs, and reminiscences of Kluskap. Places like Cape d'Or at outer Minas Basin, Grand Lake/Shubenacadie River and

---

[149] Rand 1894/1971: 451-452.

[150] Rand 1894/1971: 293.

[151] Most probably it is the rocks at Cape Split that Rand writes about. Clara Dennis (1934: 109) in *Down in Nova Scotia* has a picture of the petrified Grandmother from this area and a story of how Kluskap transformed her and his dogs into stones.

[152] Rand 1919: 37. Rand elsewhere spells it *Cookumijenagwanak* (Rand 1875: 85). Cape Dolphin is the English rendering of the French name Cape Dauphin.

[153] "Each band of the Micmac seems inclined to localize the Gluskap myth ..." (Speck 1922: 145).

Cape Dolphin were surrounded with stories. If there were one or many rocks in the stories that were depicted as the petrified Grandmother depends on whose perspective we take. The scholar, who has access to data from the whole province, can observe that there were more than one place connected with these stories, but for each local Mi'kmaq there was only one Grandmother rock.

Kluskap on Cape Breton

Stories of Kluskap are also found among neighboring peoples such as the Maliseet and Penobscot. When Kluskap chases a beaver in Maliseet stories it is the local place names from this tribe that appear in the texts and thus get their explanations: "Looking up the river he saw a young beaver going up, so he threw two stones up to the Tobique to frighten him back. These are the Tobique Rocks. Where the dam stood, where the falls are, it flowed back to Hampton Ferry, and above Fredricton. There is an island in Kennenecasis Bay, which was the beaver house. It is called in Indian, 'Qua-beet-wo-sis' = beaver house ..."[154] When Speck collects oral tradition among the Penobscot, Kluskap is again represented as a transformer of the landscape. As in Nova Scotia, he and his travels are given as the reason why the landscape has its contemporary form.[155]

Although the motifs are the same, the variations in Kluskap stories show that it is in a well-known, local area that he moves and not in an abstract landscape. Since Speck and Parsons both collected their stories on Cape Breton, this island is often given a central role when Kluskap chases a beaver or disappears into caves with a promise to return. Speck starts his retelling of the beaver hunt with the creation of Kluskap by *Ktcini'sxam*. Here, the home of Kluskap is not Cape Blomidon on mainland Nova Scotia, but Fairy Holes on Cape Breton, a place that Speck locates between St. Ann's Bay and Great Bras d'Or, i.e. undoubtedly the cave in Kelly's Mountain:

> Gluskap was the god of the Micmacs. The great deity, Ktcini'sxam, made him out of earth and then breathed on him, and he was made. This was at Cape North (Kte'dnuk, 'At the North Mountain'), Cape Breton, on the eastern side. Gluskap's home was at Fairy Holes (Gluska'be wi'gwôm, 'Gluskap's wigwam'.) Just in front of the caves at this headland are three little islands in a straight line, long

[154] Jack 1895: 194.
[155] Speck 1935: 6pp.

and narrow, known as Ciboux Islands. These are the remains of Gluskap's canoe, where he left it when it was broken. At Plaster Cove (Twô´butc, 'Looking Out') two girls saw his canoe broken into three pieces; and they laughed, making fun of Gluskap. At this he told them that they would remain forever where they are; and today there are two rocks at Plaster Cove which are the remains of these girls. Next, a little farther north, at Wreck Cove, Gluskap jumped from his canoe when it foundered, lifting his moose-skin canoe-mat out, and left it on the shore to dry. It is there to-day. There is still to be seen a space of fifteen acres of bare ground where the mat lay. Then he started on and went to Table Head (Padalodi'tck), on the south side of Great Bras d'or. Here he had his dinner. Next he struck into Bras d'or Lake straight to Wycogamagh, on the western end, where, at Indian Island (Wi'sik, Cabin), he started a beaver and drove him out, following Bras d'or Lake to St. Patrick's Bay. At Middle River he killed a young beaver, whose bones are still to be seen there.[156] Then Gluskap followed the big beaver until he lost track of him for a while. He stood at Wi'sik (Indian Island), and took a piece of rock and threw toward the place where he thought the beaver was. This rock is now Red Island (PauEnuktê'gan). This started the beaver up, and he ran back through St. Peter's Channel and burrowed through underneath, which is the cause of the crooks and windings there now. Then the chase continued outside in the ocean, when the beaver struck out for the Bay of Fundy. Here at Pli'gAnk ('Split Place'), Split Point, Gluskap dug out a channel with his paddle, forming Minas Basin, Nova Scotia. There he killed the beaver. Near here is a small island, which is the pot in which he cooked the beaver; and there, too, is another rock, near Pot Rock, which is Gluskap's dog left behind at this time. Turtle (Mi'ktcik) was Gluskap's uncle. Here with his pot and dog he turned Turtle into a rock, and left them all there. Near where he killed the beaver are still to be seen the bones turned to rock. When he broke the channel here in Minas Basin to drain the water out, in order to uncover the beaver, he left it so that to-day the water all drains out at each tide. So Gluskap caused the Bay of Fundy tides. Then he crossed over eastward and came out at Pictou, where there were many Indians living. While there, he taught the

[156] According to Speck's informant, a Mi'kmaq by the name of Ta'mekian (Tom Stevens) had found the beaver bones at Middle River a long time ago, and they were now kept, he said, at the Museum of Halifax (Speck 1915: 60, footnote 1).

> Micmacs how to make their implements for hunting and fishing, − bows, arrows, canoes, and the like.[157]

Speck writes that the Mi'kmaq considered the Fairy Holes cave as very powerful and that it was not innocent business to go into it, since it was the home of Kluskap. Speck was told that five Mi'kmaq with lanterns had gone into the cave 62 years earlier to discover how far they could get. Speck gives the names of the persons that visited the cave: Joe Bernard, Francis Bernard, Clement Bernard, Joe Newell and Tom Newell. When they returned to the entrance they saw that a stone had been moved.

Wallis and Parsons also tell of a visit in a magical cave. Wallis' informant John Newell says that in a mountain on Cape Breton there is a big cave that is Kluskap's cabin. He does not give the name of the place but it is probably the same as is mentioned by Speck. There is a good chance that Newell had heard the story when he was young, since he stayed on the island until he was twenty, at which age he moved to Pictou Landing on the mainland. He tells that some men with torches went into the cave to explore it. As was the custom they first put a stick at the entrance, so that the opening would not be closed. The men did not notice anything particular in the cave. According to Newell, the Mi'kmaq long ago believed that, through the cave, they could reach the land of the stone dwarfs.

Parsons' informant, Isabelle Googoo Morris, had heard a story about the cave from her grandfather, Peter Newell. The events should have taken place two hundred years ago, but the place here referred to is Smoket, Cape North. According to Morris, Peter Newell was one of seven men who wanted to find Kluskap in the cave. Despite hard searching they failed. However, another man, Joe Nuelich (little Newell), had greater luck on his visit. He met both Kluskap and Grandmother.[158]

Parsons also has a version of the beaver hunt:

> From Salt Mountain (*Wi'sik*[159]) Gluskap was chasing a beaver. The beaver made holes in Indian Island (*Elnuwe'e minigu*) trying to get under it. He did get under, went to Elguanik, came out at Tewil

---

[157] Speck 1915: 59-60.

[158] Parsons 1925: 87.

[159] Ibid. Parsons explains the English name by saying that the water that flows from the mountain is very salt. Her informant, Isabelle Googoo Morris, does not know the meaning of *Wi'sik*. For her Speck's explanation (above) "cabin" is not the right word.

> (Grand Narrows). The rock Gluskap threw at Beaver became Little Island. The lesser of the two elevations of Indian Island was also made by the soil thrown by Gluskap. From Salt Mountain Gluskap could make Indian Island in one step, i.e., stand with one foot on the mountain, the other on the island.
> Little Island is said to consist of a rock rising about ten feet out of the water. But as it is still under the spell of Gluskap, (my term, the Morrises used various paraphrases, e.g., 'whatever Gluskap says is true') if anybody goes up on that rock, 'trying out Gluskap's word,' he feels as if he were held fast. Mrs. Morris's grandfather, Peter Newell, climbed this rock and there he was, 'couldn't come down. Old lady had to push his eel spear up to him, got him down.' He reported that the world had seemed very distant, far below him, out of reach.[160]

The earlier mentioned story in Rand's text about how Grandmother, the Bear Woman, was transformed into a rock, also appears in Parsons' text. Here she is transformed into a stone close to Baddeck. The name of the place is *Gomi-jagune'wu*, Grandmother Mountain, and if the rock becomes wet it heralds a coming storm. Parsons also gives a version of Kluskap's moose hunt. As in Rand's text, it ends on the mainland, where Kluskap transforms the kettle in which he cooked the moose meat into Spenser's Island and the hunting dog into a stone.[161]

Wallis' informant John Newell also mentions some place names on Cape Breton. Kluskap transforms a stone into a canoe, which he needs in order to travel along the Bras d'Or Lakes. This stone is located in St. Peters and looks like a canoe with a man in the middle and a paddle.[162] Newell goes on to tell that he and his wife had seen the *pugulatamutc*, stone dwarfs, playing with fire balls at one of the many mountains on the island. They had also seen footprints of the dwarfs at a cave near the Eskasoni reserve. The places that carried marks from Kluskap seemed to be extra powerful. One of these places was a rock in Middle River, close to Nianza (Nyansa). A Mi'kmaq told Wallis that he could cause a rainfall if he threw water on the other side of the rock. He meant that this was the same place where Kluskap had eaten the young beaver he had been chasing. A rock close to Upper Musquodoboit on the mainland, was likened to a man who was sleeping, covered with a blanket.

[160] Parsons 1925: 86.
[161] Ibid.
[162] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 329.

According to Mi'kmaq tradition it was an old man (Grandfather) who went out hunting, was tired, fell asleep, and was transformed into a stone. At the beginning of the 20th century the old Mi'kmaq could put a penny or some other gift at the stone and wish for something.[163]

It seems to have been a custom among the Mi'kmaq to give small offerings to Kluskap. When they wished for something, they gave a little portion of the thing that they wanted. If Kluskap thought the giver deserved a counter gift, he gave it but in a larger portion.[164] The custom seems to have been in use long after the turn of the 19th century. Common places to put the offerings at were rocks and caves:

> Gluskap's door is at St. Ann's. There you would throw in some dry punk and a little fish for his fire and food. You say, 'I wish you give me good luck.' Gluskap does not want anybody to come inside. 'If anybody wants anything, he can put something for Gluskap outside on stone.' ... 'When you go to see Gluskap, at Smoket', Cape North, you say 'My dear grandfather, I just come on you door. I want you to help me.' You leave money inside door, piece of silver. You take two or three stones away with you, that's your luck.' ...
> At Cape Dolphin, Big Bras d'Or, there is a door through the cliff, Gluskap's door. Outside, there is a stone like a table. Indians going hunting will leave on it tobacco and eels, to give them good luck. They do this today ... [165]

Place names such as Fairy Holes, the door at Cape Dolphin, and Big Bras d'Or[166] make it possible to locate Kluskap's Cave to Kelly's Mountain, which in 1990 was threatened by large scale mining and became the focus of Mi'kmaq activism in defense of what was now presented as Kluskap's Sacred Mountain.[167]

The examples above show how the landscape and the stories fertilized each other and together deeply engaged the Mi'kmaq in the world they inhabited. Leland's notion of a "*Volk*-soul" could be read as referring to what Tim Ingold describes as "an active, practical and perceptual engagement with

---

[163] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 154.
[164] Elder 1871: 14.
[165] Parsons 1925: 87.
[166] Speck 1915: 59, Parsons 1925: 87; cf. Davis 1992: 43.
[167] Alf Hornborg 1994.

constituents of the dwelt-in-world."[168] The stories about the landscape were loaded with emotions and bodily experience and indeed evoked what Leland called a "soul". They became poetic maps of human lifeworlds. But as the landscape changes there is a risk that the stories, too, will vanish since they have been so closely woven into it. Some of these changes are actually caused by nature itself. One of Wallis' informants says in 1911 that although most of Kluskap's deeds can still be seen, the stones of Grandmother and Kluskap's dogs at Ship Head[169] had broken apart and fallen into the sea.[170] The greatest threat to the landscape, however, was the Englishmen, who transformed much of Nova Scotia's forests into fields and pastures.

The little stories and their encompassment of the global world

Rand writes that in the middle of the 19th century the conditions for the Mi'kmaq in the coastal provinces did not differ from how they were two hundred years earlier. Most of them still lived in *wigwams* and lead a nomadic life.[171] In the forty-year period that Rand worked with them, they had been forced to settle down on reserves and Rand noticed that this implied a more European lifestyle. The Mi'kmaq began, Rand writes, to live like Westerners:

> 'At that time (1846) the condition of the Indians was not materially different from what it was two hundred years previously. It was the policy of that day to keep them in ignorance and degradation. They were taught to preserve the traditions of barbarism, and on no account to become like white men. But, thank God, all this has been changed in forty years, in spite of bitter opposition and difficulties that were apparently insurmountable ... They have the Gospel and other books in their own language; they live in houses, dress, work and eat like other people, and have property and schools of their own.'[172]

---

[168] Ingold 1996: 120-121.

[169] This could be Head of Ship Harbor, or *Wagwosk* ("Head of the Lake") (Rand 1919: 83).

[170] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 332.

[171] Elder (1871: 4) confirms Rand's observations. He writes that Mi'kmaq customs and beliefs still persisted despite Christianity. In spite of the hard efforts by English authorities to get the Mi'kmaq to settle down, they preferred a nomadic life.

[172] Rand 1894/1971: xviii.

In the stories collected by Rand, events from the 19th century are intertwined with older traditions, as for example in *The magical coat*, where towns, alcohol, and soldiers are mixed with Mi'kmaq beliefs in magical power and transformation.[173] Such stories reflect a Mi'kmaq way of understanding the process of radical transformation from a trading partner to an alienated country proletariat dependent on alms from the White community.

The encounter with Europeans is a recurrent theme in the stories, which thus provide a Mi'kmaq perspective on their history. To understand the Mi'kmaq's account of "the new" we must look at the context that generated it. [174] The stories give a local perspective on the global structures that penetrated Mi'kmaq daily life. They are attempts to account for the global processes that had brought the strangers from across the sea, but from an outlook that could not encompass that which was to be explained.[175] The changes manifested themselves at all levels of the Mi'kmaq lifeworld: in the landscape (ecology), in social and economic relations, and in ideology. At all levels the Mi'kmaq tried to integrate "the new" in their lives. The most visible change was the

---

[173] Rand 1894/1971: 14.

[174] Cf. Anderson 1996 and Ingold 1996.

[175] Alf Hornborg 1998a: 118pp. Alf Hornborg discusses the Algonkin fur trade and the different attempts by scholars to explain why the Indians abandoned their hunting taboos and nearly exterminated some fur bearing animals in their quest for pelts. The environmental historian Martin (1978) tries to explain the changes by referring to the Indian cosmologies as contributing to the exploitation of some animal species. But what Hornborg finds missing in the study is a clearer discussion of the interaction between the world system and the local, human conditions, i.e. how global, economic strategies dominate and change local people's life worlds: "No more than the fur trade can industrialization be understood as a local phenomenon, separate from the distant markets which made it possible. In both cases we must imagine that consciousness and ecological practice (for instance secularization and exploitation) recursively reinforced each other day by day, in a direction ultimately determined by the logic of global flows of goods" (p. 119, my translation). In retrospect, and with a map of the fur trade in front of them, scholars may create a completely different model than the historical Algonkin was able to do when, from a very local perspective, he was to explain the changes around him, but this does not mean that the local interpretations have nothing to say. Modern scholars have lately become more apt to listen to "the Other's" explanations. Using the concept of "ethnohermeneutics", Armin Geertz (1992: 31) thus wants to get closer to a Hopi lifeworld: "the people we are studying are also practicing the art of hermeneutics, especially during the on-the-spot interview situation, but certainly also in a variety of situations both in everyday life and in times of culturally significant confrontations. *And this hermeneutical behavior must be drawn into our academic interpretations*" [italics added]. Clifford Geertz (1983: 57) has pointed at the difficulties in combining the ethnographer's view with the Native's point of view: "Confinement to experience-near concepts leaves an ethnographer awash in immediacies, as well as entangled in vernacular. Confinement to experience-distant ones leaves him stranded in abstractions and smothered in jargon ... how, in each case, ought one to deploy them so as to produce an interpretation of the way a people lives which is neither imprisoned within their mental horizons, an ethnography of witchcraft as written by a witch, nor systematically deaf to the distinctive tonalities of their existence, an ethnography of witchcraft as written by a geometer."

transformation of the landscape. A new mode of production and a strange flora and fauna were introduced by the Europeans and were given Mi'kmaq names. It was more difficult for them to understand invisible structures such as the market economy. Early sources from the 17th century mention confusion and irritation among the Mi'kmaq upon noticing that their trading goods, the pelts, could suddenly drop in value. For the Mi'kmaq the pelts had an absolute value, irrespective of supply and demand. Nor did they understand the social hierarchy in European society. Indians who had gone to Europe with the trading ships and returned said that they had seen an abundance of food in the big cities, yet many lived in extreme poverty, barely surviving as beggars. The visitors thought it was strange that the poor did not cause a riot, set fire to the rich men's houses and take whatever they needed.[176] They could then not imagine how they would later on be the ones to suffer and live on reserves.

We must not forget that Mi'kmaq stories are *narratives*. They give a Mi'kmaq point of view about their lifeworld and its historical transformations. But are they only fantasies? Can humans construct any perspective they want on reality? Criticism has been leveled against the extreme, constructivist position that humans are free to build any stories they wish. Even if humans do construct images of reality, the constructions are constantly tested against the world they live in.[177] This dialectic between person and environment generates a continuous revision of how experience is interpreted. The stories indicate how the Mi'kmaq were reminded daily of the painful experience of moving into reserves and how this framed their actions and life. But this pain also inspired the narrators to blend actual reality with elements that brought the stories "closer to the heart's desire".[178] The stories could also contribute to

---

[176] Jaenen 1974: 281.

[177] Anderson 1996: 112: "We are forced to deal with a world that is out there, that has its own structure, and that will not let us forget it. We, in turn, impose our own structure on it − and especially, on our perception of it. There is a constant feedback between self and environment."

[178] The quotation is from Anderson 1996: 119; cf. Geertz' (1992) analysis of the Hopi prophecies. The Hopi prophecies are not unchangeable but influenced by, and used as a response to, external influences (p. 25). A group of people do not have to passively adjust to existing conditions but can actively take part in the formulations of the new circumstances that prevail: "Hopi prophecy formulates and conceptualizes cultural confrontation in terms of symbols which are highly significant to Hopi identity. Thus it evaluates confrontation, conceives it, assimilates it, and ultimately defuses it" (p. 15). Medick (1987: 97p.) also emphasizes the agent's role in the creation of meanings: "Meaning under the conditions of asymmetrically structured social contexts of action and interpretation is never just inherited, reproduced, and transmitted in unchanging ways. It is constantly recreated by the participation of actors in that ongoing social process in which the unknown,

historical processes. The government sometimes had to change strategies if they feared a violent reaction from the Mi'kmaq, or they had to rework their plans if they noticed too much passive resistance. Power structures are created through ongoing negotiations. In such processes the Mi'kmaq stories could inspire hope for better days to come and buttress a passive resistance against oppressive White politics.

I will now show, with examples from these stories, how the Mi'kmaq interpreted their changing lifeworld. At three levels the "unknown" penetrated the Mi'kmaq lifeworld: the transformation of the landscape and thus changes in their daily environment, the changes in social and economic structures, and the presence of a new ideology.[179]

French cranberries – changes in ecology

The most obvious changes for the Mi'kmaq after the arrival of the Europeans occurred in the landscape. Since the Mi'kmaq were totally dependent on hunting and fishing, ecological changes and the exclusion from traditional hunting and fishing grounds became an increasing threat to their existence. The Mi'kmaq first tried to incorporate the newly introduced, foreign flora and fauna in their own conceptions. Rand describes how the animals and plants that had similarities with the Mi'kmaq's own, familiar species retained a native name supplemented with the prefix *Wenuch*, which means French and was shortened to *Wenj*. *Team* means a moose, and an ox or a cow was thus named *wenjuteam*. The Mi'kmaq word for cranberry is *soon* and for apple *wenjusoon*, that is a French cranberry. Rand lists about fifty words that have been constructed this way. For features with no affinities to the local world, the French names were used.[180]

Differences in culture and modes of production generated conflicts between the colonizers and the Mi'kmaq. The settler's tillage produced a completely different landscape than the one the Mi'kmaq were used to.[181] As

---

the new, and the other of social relations is assimilated by the social subjects and at the same time produced anew."

[179] Cf. Vansina (1985: 196): "oral traditions are not just a source about the past, but a historiology (one dare not write historiography!) of the past, an account of how people have interpreted it. As such oral tradition is not only a raw source. It is a hypothesis, similar to the historian's own interpretation of the past."

[180] Rand 1850: 7.

[181] Cronon (1983) has discussed how the ecological changes that followed the tillage of land in New England forced a change in Indian life. Clearcutting, for instance, was a completely unfamiliar way of treating forests. It had as a consequence that the ground froze more deeply in winter, the snow melted more slowly, flooding was more common, etc. (pp. 126).

larger areas in the Maritimes were cultivated there was less room for the landscape that the Mi'kmaq needed for their traditional subsistence as hunters and gatherers. There is clear evidence in the texts about the growing discontent among the Mi'kmaq. In his lecture in Halifax (1849), Rand describes how unfairly the changes had struck the former inhabitants of the land:

> The white man may pass from one end of Nova Scotia to the other, and travel all over the adjacent island, and see but little which reminds him, with any force, of those who once owned and occupied the soil; but the Indian can travel nowhere, and pitch his tent nowhere, without seeing that which forcibly reminds him of those who now have it in possession. Our towns, our villages, our highways, and every farmhouse and bye-path, are to him striking and affecting mementoes. Sit down in his wigwam and gain his confidence, and he will tell you your history, and that of your father's. He will refer to those happy days when his father held undisputed possession of all these regions, as the gift of the Great Spirit ... 'Our lands have been taken away; the forests have been cut down and the moose and the bear nearly exterminated. We have no skins now with which to wrap ourselves up in the winter. Government, it is true, gives us a bit of a blanket, and we spread it over the children. One awakes crying with the cold, and gives it a pull; and then another awakes crying, and he gives it a pull; and (suiting the action to the word), 'bye-and-bye they pull 'em all to pieces.'[182]

When Rand tried to translate Luke 14: 7-11 for the Mi'kmaq, they remarked that the Europeans should take more impression of Jesus' teachings about humbleness and courtesy. They found the visitors insensitive and disrespectful:

> 'When they come to our *camps*,' said he, 'they neither know where to go, what to do, nor what to say; and they commence asking questions, 'what is this? what is this? what is this?' We say nothing to them about it; but we speak of their ignorance and ill-manners among ourselves.' 'They think us about on a level with the beasts,'

[182] Rand 1850: 6-7.

> he continued, 'but in reality an Indian thinks as much of his *camp*, as the Governor does of his palace.'[183]

Bill Dumfy's story – changes in the social and economic structure

In *Bill Dumfy's story*, collected in 1911 by Wallis, a horror story is offered as an explanation of why the English provided economic aid to the Mi'kmaq. The story goes like this:

> There were few English people in Cape Breton, or in Newfoundland. They stayed there through the winter, getting fur. An Englishman and a little boy came, and the man said, 'We will stay here with them, through the winter.' The Indians were getting many furs, all the time. The Englishmen did not get nearly as many, and were about to go away. One of them said, 'How would it do to kill the Indians and take their furs?' 'All right.'
>
> Bill Dumfy, a boy who was with them, later told these things to my grandfather. They made that boy, Bill Dumfy, swear that he would not inform on them. He went, on his knees, a distance of about four feet, kissed his master's foot, made the sign of the cross over the Bible, and swore secrecy. That night they went out and ground their axes. They went about midnight, and Bill Dumfy went with them. They saw the two [Micmac] men and a woman lying asleep. They cut off their heads, and also the head of a little girl. One man rose and walked out of the wigwam, but his head had been cut off, and he fell outside. They went home and procured a pick, shovel, and two lanterns. Bill Dumfy went with them. They took two handspikes, rolled a moss-covered log away, dug a trench at the place where it had been, buried the bodies in this trench, and rolled the log back, to cover all signs of the grave. They smashed the wigwam into pieces and set fire to it. Everything was entirely consumed by the fire. They also burned their own log house, and then the murderers left for Newfoundland.
>
> They reached St. Johns, and went ashore with their big supply of furs. While they were ashore, Bill Dumfy took the water barrel and let all the water out. When they came home, they asked for water. 'There is no water,' they were told. They gave Bill Dumfy a shilling and told him to go ashore and get water. He went. While he was ashore, he went to the [police]office, told them all about the affair, and explained how he had managed to get ashore. 'Go up-

[183] Rand 1850: 14.

> stairs,' the officers said to him. They took these two men to jail. Next day, they hailed them into court. One of them said to Bill Dumfy, 'If I had known you would tell this story, I would have taken your life long ago.' For three weeks they had been planning how to kill these Indians. The men were hanged. For a long, long time the English did not let the Indians know about this, lest the latter should 'walk over and sweep the town clean.' From time to time they gave them money for seed and necessities, and they gave money to the old and needy. This is their way of paying back for the furs, which the English took from those Indians. That is why King George made the treaty with them.[184]

The story mixes a horrible incident with an explanation to why resources are distributed to the reserves. Actual facts (the distribution of goods) are thus put into a narrative context. It is difficult to assess the degree of truth in the story. What we do know is that, according to the directions from the English authorities in 1827, families that settled down on the reserves were to be given a separate lot of land, an ax, a hoe, and some seed for sowing. For sick or weak Indians a special grant would be given.[185]

The story can thus be read as an attempt by the Mi'kmaq to encompass, from their very local perspective, the larger, colonial structure. At first sight, the story contains memories of a terrible murder on Cape Breton, which prompted the authorities to reduce their bad conscience by redistributing resources to the reserves. The truth value of such stories could of course be questioned. But even if the cruel crime was committed, a historian would not explain the whole system of monetary distribution to the reserves and King George's Treaty with references to this specific case. Is the story then non-sense? There are some facts in the story regarding the colonial situation that the 19th century Mi'kmaq were aware of, for example the treaty with King George and the distribution of resources. The story, however, does not derive its meaning from how precisely it corresponds to the actual facts, but from the interpretation framing the events. Here a deeper message can be read. This message is about the meeting between two cultures, in which one is forced to yield to the other.[186] But although the Mi'kmaq had small possibilities to

---

[184] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 471-472.

[185] Hutton 1961: 218pp.

[186] In discussing the death of Captain Cook, Sahlins (1985) examines the complex problems of communication which can arise in meetings of cultures. When people in traditional societies met the colonialists (explorers, merchants, military, etc.) each side developed its own complex interpretations of the meeting: "For here,

challenge colonial power, they did not resign. The conflict over the land is evident in the story, but now as narrated by the Mi'kmaq. Their historiography tells us how a conquering culture tries to compensate for the stolen country by distributing petty alms to its true owners.[187] Wallis gives another example of how a historical event could be revised by a Mi'kmaq narrator. The story provides some facts that could be checked, but they are put in a narrative context in which the wishes and interpretations of the narrator build the "true story":

> 'Two dogs arrived at Ste Anne de Restigouche to warn the Indians that a French warship was coming to attack them. They had never seen a Frenchman or a ship. When the vessel appeared and pointed its guns at the shore, a Mi'kmaq with the 'power' rendered them useless. Not one cannon could be fired. The Indians killed all of the French aboard and then sunk the ship. It has now been raised, and you can see it over there next to the church.'[188]

Wallis comments on the story in a footnote stating that one of the first Europeans who visited Baie de Chaleurs was the Frenchman Jacques Cartier in 1534. He continues:

> The final statement is true. In 1936 Father Pacifique received permission and funds to realize a long-held plan to raise the *Marquis*

---

in the clash of cultural understandings and interest, both change and resistance to change are themselves historic issues. People are criticizing each other. Besides, their different *interpretations* of the same events also criticize each other, and so allow us a proper sense of the cultural relativity of the event and the responses to it. Still, all these processes are occurring in the same general way *within* any society, independently of radical differences in culture, so long as actors with partially distinct concepts and projects relate their actions to each other − and to a world that may prove refractory to the understandings of any and all concerned" (1985: 68).

[187] J. Ramsey (1977) shows with an example from the Paiute how the assimilation of Biblical stories into Native tradition could be a way to criticize the colonizers. The basic plot in a story could be the Fall, but in Native tradition it is Coyote that plants the apple tree and invited Indians to eat the fruits. The White man is the rattlesnake that sits in the tree to prevent the Indians from eating the apples: "If the snake hadn't been in that tree, everything would have belonged to the Indians. Just because they were snakes and came here, the white people took everything away. They asked the Indians where they had come from. That's why they took everything and told the Indians to go way out in the mountains and live" (p. 450p.) Ramsey observes how bitterness over the colonizer's dictatorial ways not only concerns the fight for the land but also the right to define its legitimate owner: "You took away this land without even recognizing our mythological claim to be its people, and you even tried to force *your* origin myth on us. Here, we give it back to you, as adapted to recent history" (p. 451).

[188] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 318.

> *de Malauze*, an unarmed French supply ship sunk by the British off Restigouche in 1760 during a small naval engagement. The raising of the vessel and its place in local history received publicity in the English-language press and was the feature story in the final number of Father Pacifique's Mi'kmaq-language paper, the *Messager Micmac*. Eel River Mi'kmaq, who read English and live only a few miles from the city of Dalhousie, could hardly have escaped knowing what actually happened two hundred years ago. But with total disregard of available facts, the defenseless *Marquis de Malauze* was given a second two hundred years of age, grafted to a typical hero story, and made legend. I might add that at Restigouche, where sightseeing taxis stop each summer day before the remains of the old ship, no Indian mentioned it or its origin as either myth or reality.[189]

Wallis remarks that the Mi'kmaq in this case neglect historical facts although they know the "true" story. Although Wallis hears this story from "modern" Mi'kmaq who should know the facts, they had still chosen to retell it from their own perspective. The fact of the ship's existence is submerged in the painful memory that they have lost their land, and some of the facts are changed in order to kindle feelings of intermittent victory instead of assuming the role of eternal losers.

When the English defeated the French in the province, the Mi'kmaq from now on had to witness how English settlers and companies threatened their access to hunting grounds and rivers. The English designed treaties that forced the Mi'kmaq to retreat or to start new wars. Although the treaties were written to the advantage of the winner, the English frequently broke them. To keep the Mi'kmaq who violently opposed the broken treaties in check, it even happened that the English paid for Mi'kmaq scalps.[190] New suggestions were offered on giving the Indians allotments, where they could go hunting and fishing without trespassing on any settler's land. The problem was that many of the English did not follow the agreements but instead took possession of some of the Mi'kmaq land lots. Although the authorities in the province requested that the settlers should respect the Mi'kmaq allotments, the trespassing did not stop. The requests remained only warnings and did not cause any interventions by the government.

---

[189] Ibid.

[190] Whitehead 1991: 117.

Sympathy for the French and animosity towards the treacherous English can be detected between the lines in the Kluskap stories. In one of them Kluskap helps a French warship. The French ship is anchored together with an English ship in a calm harbor on the coast. The wind is howling and the mist is dense. Both camps are short of food, firewood, and water. The crews notice two *wigwams* on the shore. One of them belongs to Kluskap and the other to Grandmother. One of the Frenchmen decides to go ashore and meets the old woman and a boy, Little Marten. He asks for water, firewood, and food. The woman willingly fetches him an armful of wood, a vessel with water, some flour, and meat. She gives the captain of the crew careful instructions about putting the goods they receive from her in their usual place in the ship. The next day the crew finds not only its wood supply full, but also the water butt and the flour bin. The story goes on to say that the English would not go to the old woman for help. The French, however, showed mercy towards their antagonists and gave them some of their supplies. Otherwise, the story goes, the English would not have survived.[191]

In the story *Kluskap and the two Kings,* Kluskap visits Europe.[192] He travels over the ocean with the help of a whale, as he usually does when traveling over water, and stays on an island off the English coast. On the island there are such big trees that the treetops are hardly visible. The king of England looks with desirous eyes at the forest and orders the trees to be cut down. Kluskap protests and says that it is his island and his trees:

> The English began cutting wood, to put in their ship. He told them not to do so – 'All the wood on the island belongs to me'. The King sent the ship back to get the man. The Captain went ashore and said to him, 'Come aboard; the King wishes to see you. We will put you ashore.' 'No; go back; tomorrow morning I shall be there.' They reported his words to the King. On the following morning it was found that the island was close to the shore. The King told Gluskap to come ashore. 'I am not ready to go yet,' said Gluskap; 'I shall go when I am ready.' The King threatened to kill him when he did come ashore.[193]

---

[191] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 335-336.

[192] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 332-335. Leland (1884: 127-130) has a similar version as Wallis', but his story is transcribed from the Passamaquoddy, neighbors of the Mi'kmaq. In this story the Englishmen are portrayed in a more sympathetic way. The French try to kill Kluskap but the kind king of France finally saves him.

[193] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 333.

Apparently the king was not a reliable man. When Kluskap is set ashore, two officers put handcuffs on him and try to burn him at a stake. But this fails; when the fire has burnt down Kluskap sits in the ashes and smokes his pipe. The king realizes that this stranger is dangerous and that he must be killed by any means, so he tells his men to load a cannon and put Kluskap at its mouth. Not even this could defeat the hero. When the king arrives he wants to shake hands with the powerful man, but Kluskap refuses. He says that he had come with good intentions but that the king had treated him badly. The king realizes that the battle is lost and falls on his knees in front of his conqueror. But to Kluskap it is not power that is most important, but noble and honest behavior. Once again the underlying theme is the English conquest of the Mi'kmaq. Yet there is a satisfaction, a moral triumph in the story. The English may think that they have defeated the Mi'kmaq, but there is a mightier power on the side of the Mi'kmaq. The story continues:

> 'Get up' said Gluskap; 'I don't want that. But do not treat people in such manner as you have treated me, for you do not know whom you may encounter. You may be the Master of the World, but there is another who is Master over you. I shall leave you now. If I had not shown myself more powerful than you, you would have killed me. But even I, as well as yourself, have a Master.' The King told his sailors to take this man to his palace. 'No; I do not want any of you or any of your people near me. Your people are of no account − they are not trustworthy. If I were not able to withstand you, I should now be a dead man. However, you have had your last opportunity to injure me.'[194]

Kluskap leaves England and goes to France. He is kindly received by the French king, who visits his *wigwam* and invites him to the palace. Although Kluskap is pleased with this meeting, he has learned to be careful after his encounter with the English king and thus rejects the invitation. He promises to return one day and also takes the opportunity to warn the king about the poor conditions in the country. If the king is not more careful, Kluskap says, he might lose his power. The king listens and is frightened by Kluskap's prophecy. The storyteller adds that it has been fulfilled today. Kluskap was right. When the story is told to Wallis there is no king in France. But this historiography, of course, is not meant only to describe objective processes. It is an

[194] Wallis 1955: 334.

oppressed group's way of writing history, asserting that although the colonial power is mighty, it is the Mi'kmaq who are morally superior.

Changes in ideology – the missionary as "the Other"

The encounter between the Mi'kmaq and Europeans was also a meeting between two different cosmologies. There are many examples in the early missionary stories of how the Mi'kmaq agreed to be converted as soon as they realized the superiority of the Christian faith.[195] But there are also later, Mi'kmaq versions of how these meetings proceeded. When the conversion stories are told from "the Other's" point of view, the missionaries are not as successful. In Kluskap's meeting with the English king, the evil colonial power is attacked. Humor was one of the few weapons available to the Mi'kmaq. The following two texts by Parsons and Wallis most probably cheered the audience up. Although the Mi'kmaq had then already been Catholics for a long time, there is still an awareness of their distinctiveness shown in the stories. The Mi'kmaq are thus depicted as being totally unable to understand the first French missionaries and the foreign culture. Here is Parsons' text *Colloquies between the first priest and the Indians*:

> When the priest first came most all the Indians were witches. Some were willing to be christened, some were unwilling. They asked the priest. 'What is christening for?' – 'If you are not christened, you are lost for good.' – 'Lost, in the woods?' – 'No, in hell.' –'Where is hell?' – 'Black place, fire there burns the soul.' – 'How do you go there, by road?' – 'No, your soul goes there.' – 'Where is my soul?' – 'You might sicken and die. After you die, you might see your soul.' – 'How can a soul go out from the birch-bark cover around the dead body, tightly bound?' – 'You should dig a hole and put the dead in it.' – 'That would be even harder to get out of, couldn't go anywhere then.' – 'Yes, you could go to Heaven.' – 'Heaven? what is Heaven?' – 'Nice band [of music] in Heaven, nice berries there.' – 'How go there?' – 'If you do not fight, do not talk bad, you can go there. If you murder, steal, you will go to Hell, for your sin.' – 'Sin? What is sin?' They knew *nothing*.

[195] There are many reasons to believe that the stories of conversion have been designed by the missionaries to satisfy their homeland's demand that its messengers should be successful. Some of the missionary stories were intended to be exciting, and trope (e.g. triad and hyperbole) was frequently used. Inspiration from Biblical stories can also be detected; it is possible, for instance, that Elijah's fight with the Baal priests at Mount Carmel could have been an inspiring model of how successful missionary work should proceed (*Jesuit Relations* 1959, I: 289-291; cf. I Kings. 18:20-40).

> Finally, very few refused to be christened, and afterwards, as the priest wanted, to come to confessing. But three men would not go to be christened, among them the biggest witch of them all. He was very much against the priests. He said, 'No Heaven, no Hell. When you die, you gone, can't speak.' He was the worst fellow of all. He was about forty-five. Old lady [i.e. his wife] coaxed him. 'Better go, get christen', like the rest.' At last he went. 'What name do you like?' they asked him. 'Best name, the Lord.' The priest said, 'Nobody can have that name, only one Lord. What other name?' – 'I'll be named the Devil.' – 'No, you can't have that name.' – 'Well, I'll be named Swallow (*tum'hatolnes*).' – 'No. You can't have that name. That's a bird's name.' – 'I have proposed three names. You refuse them all. I am going home.' – 'No, you can't go.' Then the friend he went hunting with said he would give him a name − Gabriö (Gabriel). 'All right,' he agreed to that, 'that's a nice Indian name.'[196]

Despite all misunderstandings the story ends with the "witch" giving his *bu'owino'di*[197] to the priest, who finally manages to get control over its magical power and throws it away forever: "Ever since that folk have been christened, praying, paying Indian taxes."[198]

Wallis' version describes the arrival of the first Frenchmen. In this text, also, the combatants for the two ideologies are fighting each other, but in this battle the spokesman for the Christian Faith is not given the last word:

> When the French [first] came it was raining. The Indians saw the warship. The children thought the thunder had torn a big tree up. They went home, and said to those there, 'See what the storm did last night!' 'No!' 'The thunder has pitched a big tree up, roots and all.'
>
> Two years later, another vessel came. The French went ashore. The Indians found their tracks. They did not know what kind of beast this was. Everybody was asking, 'Do you know what kind of beast made these tracks?' 'No.' They asked everyone.
>
> A Frenchman had defecated. They came to the excrement. They did not know what it was. An Indian put his finger in it, placed the fin-

[196] Parsons 1925: 90.

[197] *Bu'owino'di* was a bag in which powerful Mi'kmaq could keep bones from small animals that were used for magical reasons. Isabelle Googoo Morris, who tells the story, explains that the bones could be used to cure or send sickness to someone.

[198] Parsons 1925: 91.

> ger to his nose, and smelled it. He did not know what it was. Next day, they saw the French. The Frenchmen signaled the Indians to them, and gave them some biscuits. The Indians did not know what use they could be put to, and played with them as quoits. Next day, the Frenchmen gave them a loaf of bread. The Indians tried to strike fire with it [that is, use it as punk]. It would not make fire, so they threw it away.
> The French could not civilize them, for the Indians threw away everything that the French gave them. Five years later, a French Priest came. Among the Indians was a powerful medicineman. The priest asked him, 'What name would you like to have?' 'Mary.' 'No, that is a woman's name. Try again.' 'God.' 'No; God has charge of us all.' 'Devil.' 'No; he takes care of Hell.' Finally the priest left him, for he could not get any satisfaction out of the medicineman.[199]

In both these stories, it is from a Mi'kmaq perspective that the encounter is portrayed. The perception of the European "Other" is demonstrated even at a corporeal level. To not recognize human excrements is a way of expressing doubts about the human status of the Europeans. The birch-bark cover around the dead tells us about Mi'kmaq burial customs and the "nice berries" about their food. The ignorance about the loaf of bread is not pure fiction. It was through the Europeans that the Mi'kmaq first became acquainted with bread. Practices of christening and name-giving also show differences in culture. In Wallis' version the priest gives up when he hears the ridiculous names suggested by the Mi'kmaq, but in Parson's story another Mi'kmaq finally succeeds in suggesting an acceptable name. The ambivalence in relation to Christianity can be read between the lines. After years of mission, the Mi'kmaq had accepted and in their own way integrated Catholicism in their lifeworlds, *but* they also had an identity of their own, different from that of mainstream society.

The meeting between the two cultures surely influenced the contexts in which the Mi'kmaq placed their hero Kluskap. The confrontations between Kluskap and the colonizers reflect the Mi'kmaq lifeworld at the time when the stories were written down. Contemporary experiences from reserve life, authorities, and White people's behavior are narrated under the disguise of Kluskap stories. To use history for contemporary purposes, of course, is not something characteristic only for the Mi'kmaq. Kluskap could be said to

[199] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 469-470; cf. p. 387.

represent the whole group of Mi'kmaq. He is one of the first persons to meet the Europeans and has even predicted their arrival. From the historical sources we know that there were Mi'kmaq who went with the sailors to Europe. We saw above how Kluskap crosses the Atlantic, only to find treachery and deceit among the White people. But there is more than kings and political power for Kluskap to negotiate with. He also met the most powerful of all White men: Jesus.

Kluskap – "Owner of the animals", manitou*, or the Savior?*

The Kluskap stories tell us about a time when the culture hero and his people ruled over the world that the Mi'kmaq inhabited, but they are documents of oral tradition as it was recounted to missionaries and scholars at *that* time.[200] It is possible that Kluskap once had other characteristics than the 19th century material shows, but this will remain speculations since these texts are the oldest versions available. In an article about religious beliefs among North American Indians, Åke Hultkrantz suggests a general connection between the culture hero and the owner of the animals.[201] According to Hultkrantz, bone ceremonialism is understandable only in relation to the notion of spiritual guardians. In the story *Bring-back-animals* some Mi'kmaq meet an unnamed man, who has the power to reanimate the bones of dead animals, which suggests that he is an owner of the animals. The man owns a stone canoe and lives with his Grandmother in a *wigwam* in the forest. These three features (stone canoe, Grandmother, and *wigwam*) are usually attributed to Kluskap and no doubt indicate the identity of the powerful stranger:

> The man inside the wigwam said, 'I have lived here since the world began. I have my grandmother, she was here when the world was made'... The man in the wigwam began to beat on bark and to sing. He said, 'I am singing for the animals, all the animals (*waisi's*)[202] to come alive, to come back to life, from all those parts, wings, heads, feet, that have been thrown away' ...

---

[200] Cf. Harrod (2000: xx), or the analysis of Hopi prophecies by Geertz (1992: 141): "At any rate, the oral tradition of the Traditionalists has become written tradition ... The written text imparts the illusion of permanence ... "

[201] Hultkrantz 1961. In his study of the Pawnee, R. Pettazzoni says that the origin of the trickster character is in the Pawnee's earlier life as hunters. The trickster is originally a master of the animals but is later transformed into a creator and lord of the world (Gill & Sullivan 1992: 309).

[202] Parsons (1925: 73, footnote 2) interprets this word as *waichi'ch*, which are small animals or animal helpers.

> He stopped singing at daybreak. In the morning, he said to the visitors, 'That is my work every night. I don't like to see people waste any part of the animals. They should save everything, they should save eel skins and other parts. What they can not save they should bury. They should not waste any hair or anything.' ... They went down to the shore. He said, 'Do you want to see the fish come?' He took out a shell whistle. The bottom was very clear. They could see all kinds of fish. 'These are my fish,' he said, 'They come from all those parts people throw away on the shore. I sing for them and they come back.'[203]

Kluskap returns life to the dead animals by chanting to their bones. This is one of many examples of Kluskap's special relation to the animals in the forest, in the ocean, and in the rivers. He is a leader not only for the Mi'kmaq, but also for non-humans. Wild animals go to his big *wigwam* to be taken as prey, and whales carry him across the ocean, when he calls upon them to do so. There is no clear evidence in the historical sources that the Mi'kmaq traditionally believed in a single owner of all the animals. Wallis writes that his informant John Newell said that "[T]here is no 'headman' of all animals … each species has a headman, which is larger than the others."[204] But Wallis also writes that some Mi'kmaq speak about the moose as a chief of all animals and the whale as a master of life in the sea. Scholars who want to study notions of animal leaders among the Algonkins would have to turn to the Mi'kmaq's neighbors in order to get more information. According to the Passamaquoddy, when Kluskap departed from them, he took with him the owner of every animal species, which caused the animals (e.g. wolves, loons) to mourn not only Kluskap, but also their respective master.[205]

Is it possible, then, that Kluskap in pre-Columbian Mi'kmaq culture was the same as the owner of the animals? This is a problematic question, firstly because he is not even mentioned by the missionaries in the 17th century. When first mentioned in the 19th century records, his behaviour is clearly influenced by the new conditions of Mi'kmaq life. He is their powerful leader, but in a world dominated by the colonizers. Power over Mi'kmaq reserve life derived from other sources than Kluskap, i.e. from distant monarchs, the colonial government, the church, and Jesus. This makes Kluskap in the 19th

[203] Parsons 1925: 73.
[204] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 106.
[205] Leland 1884: 69, footnote 2.

century texts a highly ambiguous figure. Christian beliefs in a Son of God and a future Messiah are conflated with a Mi'kmaq culture hero and *manitou*/*buoin*. There is also a possibility that the individual narrator was of great importance in the various depictions of Kluskap. There are reasons to believe that Kluskap tended to resemble a Messiah primarily among those persons who were most engaged in Catholicism.

Kluskap does not appear in Mi'kmaq stories as a god or as God, i.e. a target of veneration. There are no prayers to him.[206] Although there is no evidence of a formal cult, he was highly honored among the Mi'kmaq. Rand writes about Kluskap: "He was, to say the least, almost an object of worship."[207]

Hultkrantz remarks that Amerindians traditionally lacked a word corresponding to the Western word "religion".[208] One problem in defining the character of Kluskap, and the Mi'kmaq's relationship to him, may be that the concept of the divine among North American Natives would be hard to grasp for a Westerner. Many attempts to describe Amerindian beliefs have failed, since they have started from a Western concept of God: "The conclusion we can draw is that theistic beliefs among the really 'primitive' peoples, hunters and collectors, rarely fit such labels as monotheism or polytheism."[209] The spiritual dimension in traditional beliefs was so closely attached to daily life that the distinction "natural"/"supernatural" becomes meaningless.[210]

As among other hunters, there are no Mi'kmaq temples to visit or idols to worship. The missionary stories from the 17th century show how difficult it is for the missionaries to understand Mi'kmaq spirituality. The Recollect Le Clercq, who was active among the Mi'kmaq of the Gaspé Peninsula at the end of the 17th century, thus came to the following conclusion:

> The Gaspesians, if we except those who have received the faith of JESUS CHRIST with their baptism, have never really known any deity, since they have lived down to our day without temples, priests, sacrifices, and any indication of religion. Thus, if one may judge of the past by the present, it is easy to infer that if they have worshipped any deity at all, they have shown him so little venera-

---

[206] Hoffman (1946: 388): "We know of no prayers addressed to Glooscap."
[207] Rand 1850: 28.
[208] Hultkrantz 1967: 5.
[209] Hultkrantz 1971: 66.
[210] Bailey 1937: 133.

> tion and respect that they have been in reality indifferent and unfaithful in the matter of religion.[211]

However, Le Clercq continues, the Gaspesians (Mi'kmaq) have always worshipped the sun, which gives nature its adornments and beauty. Since the sun was the source of life it was the duty of a Mi'kmaq to daily be grateful to the power that generated all beings. The only religious ceremony that Le Clercq said that he had found among the Gaspesians was when they turned their faces to the sun, said *ho, ho, ho* three times, and asked for family protection, good hunting, and a long life.[212]

There are other examples that illustrate Westerners' difficulties in understanding the Amerindian spirituality. The following quotation is from Joseph Epes Brown's 19th century meeting with the famous Sioux medicine man Black Elk:

> In my first contacts with Black Elk, almost all he said was phrased in terms involving animals and natural phenomena. I naively wished that he could begin to talk about religious matters, until I finally realized that he was, in fact, explaining his religion.[213]

For Black Elk, nature was transparent, revealing a power of a higher order. There was a conviction that another, more powerful reality was manifesting itself in nature:

> The expression, 'source of life,' can be used as a synonym for 'God,' or 'first cause,' or 'providence.' In American Indian environmental religions the environment was the source of life. In any religion the source of life is that which humans cannot exist without; all things come from it. In Indian world view the same was true of nature. All material things: food, shelter, clothing, tools came from nature, and power to use these materials also came from nature. American Indians depended on nature for survival, and they recognized their dependence; their recognition was a conceptual aspect of their religion.[214]

---

[211] Le Clercq 1691/1968: 143.
[212] Le Clercq 1691/1968: 144.
[213] Joseph Epes Brown, quoted in Vecsey 1980: 1.
[214] Vecsey 1980: 13; cf. Hultkrantz 1981: 126pp, 1985: 83; Martin 1979: 35.

Vecsey coins the concept of "environmental religion" for Indian religions. He says that the integration of environment and religion was so radical that he wants to name the Indian religion "the religion of nature ... I do not wish to deny the social, psychological, historical, and purely religious dimensions of Indian religions, but I am emphasizing perhaps the most important dimension, nature."[215]

In what way was nature transparent, and what was revealed by it? In Sioux cosmology the center of Being is a great mystery, *wakan tanka*, not accessible for humans to encompass or understand. From this center, the power is generated that gives animals, humans, and objects material form and life. Every creation in itself is a "frozen" and relatively powerless manifestation of this mighty center.[216] The natural world is thus a part of *wakan tanka* and each fragment of it worthy of respect. The Algonkins have another name for this primordial power, *manitou*. Hultkrantz translates this concept with "supernatural" or "mysterious", a manifestation of another, mightier world.[217] Bailey describes *manitou* as "a personification of the mysterious powers or forces operating in man's environment, forces that were conceived as emanations from higher forces."[218] William Jones stresses in his analysis of the Algonkin concept that it is a religious word that is impossible to give a precise definition. The theoretical interest of scholars in defining the concept represents another level than the Algonkin use of the word:

> It is futile to ask an Algonkin for an articulate definition of the substance, partly because it would be something about which he does not concern himself, and partly because he is quite satisfied with only the sentiment of its existence.[219]

Like *wakan tanka*, *manitou* is a powerful force and nature a visible proof of its activity. *Manitou*, according to Jones, is represented in Algonkian language by two different gender forms: for "manitou in the sense of a virtue, a property, an abstraction, they employ the form expressive of inanimate gender

---

[215] Vecsey 1980: 2.

[216] Kurkiala 1997: 49; Powers 1975/1982: 45pp.

[217] Hultkrantz 1967: 7. *Manitou* should not be translated as "The Great Spirit" since this concept has Christian connotations. "The Great Mystery" is a better alternative that also gives associations to substance, essence, potential, and capacity (Petrone 1990: 5).

[218] Bailey 1937: 134.

[219] Jones 1905: 183.

... When the property becomes the indwelling element of an object, then it is natural to identify the property with an animate being."[220] *Manitou* is often used metonymically:

> ... it is no trouble for an Algonkin to invest an object with the mystic substance, and then call the object by the name of the substance. The process suggests a possible explanation of how an Algonkin comes to people his world with manitou forces different in kind and degree; it explains in some measure the supernatural performances of mythological beings, the beings that move in the form of men, beasts, birds, fishes, and other objects of nature. All these are a collection of agencies. Each possesses a virtue in common with all the rest, and in so far do they all have certain marks of agreement. Where one differs from another is in the nature of its function, and in the degree of the possession of the cosmic substance. But the investment of a common, mystic virtue gives them all a common name, and that name is manitou.[221]

Manitou is no impersonal power such as the Western concept of energy but a conscious, moral power. Everything that is generated as parts of this higher Being becomes a conscious entity. Not only humans but a loon, a birch, and a clam can be "persons", since in spite of their exterior differences they have the same essence.[222] The unwillingness to divide the world into a material and a spiritual part derives from this active *manitou*, which precluded a view of nature as passive, soulless matter or the natural forces as impersonal, mechanical laws. The expression that Indians are "one with nature" is thus beside the mark, if the statement is uttered by a Westerner for whom nature is an impersonal, material system.[223]

In Mi'kmaq stories there are many examples of how the world is perceived to be part of a life-giving force. With a perspective like this, the Mi'kmaq could express their belonging to a personified universe in terms of kinship. Not only trees and animals were animated, but the stars could be "hunting" in the sky, thunder could take the form of birds, and winds and seasons could be persons. Despite this way of perceiving a personified uni-

---

[220] Jones 1905: 184.
[221] Jones 1905: 189.
[222] Whitehead 1988: 4.
[223] Gill 1982: 120, cf. Hallowell 1960: 24. On the other hand, according to Gill, the expression "being one with nature" could be reconsidered and enriched by looking upon nature as a "person".

verse, it does not seem that Indians in their everyday lives experienced themselves as being immersed in a general, cosmic power. To be a part of the power and handle it was experienced as both a threat and a possibility. It was therefore only granted to the chosen ones to use such power. Kluskap must be seen against this background to be fully understood. A story collected in 1930 opens like this:

> Kluskap is a great *mn'tu*. He has Power. But there is a greater *mn'tu*. And that One is Kji-kinap, the greatest of the *mn'tu'k*. Kji-kinap made Kluskap. Kji-kinap made the world.[224]

The story reveals what makes Kluskap into a mighty man: he has "Power". *Kji* is a prefix that means big. *Mn'tu*[225] is a variant of *manitou*. *Kinap* is a Mi'kmaq word for power. The most common Mi'kmaq word for power is otherwise *buoin*[226], a word also used for magician or sorcerer.[227] In one story *Kji-kinap* creates Kluskap by blowing life into a stone. Kluskap then continues creating on his own. This pattern is very common in North American Indian cosmologies, i.e. the highest god is helped by a companion to complete creation. The mission of the culture hero is primarily to transform the world, not to create it.[228] With the help of a woman and a man from Sky World the vegetation takes form. Some stars from the sky become animals. When everything is in order, culture comes into being. Kluskap arranges a marriage between a man and a woman, gives them their different tasks, and asks them to bring children into the world.[229]

But the story is two-layered. The Mi'kmaq stories were not transcribed until the end of the 19th century, a time when most Mi'kmaq embraced the Catholic faith. This makes it hard to separate, in the above quotation, the image of *mn'tu'k* from the belief in a Christian God. The story continues:

---

[224] Whitehead 1988: 165.

[225] *Mn'tu'k* is plural for *mn'tu*.

[226] Wallis & Wallis 1955, Hagar 1896: 173. The spelling varies: Hoffman (1946), Rand (1984), and Hagar (1896), use the spelling *booöin*, Whitehead (1988) *puoinaq*.

[227] To identify *buoin* as a sorcerer or magician is a perspective deriving from the conflict between the mission and the traditional religion. V. Erickson (1978) has described how an originally highly valued religious leader among the Mi'kmaq in the 17th century was transformed by christianity into a marginalized person with evil power. In the 19th century, the Mi'kmaq had even among themselves adopted the missionary's negative attitude toward *buoin*.

[228] Vecsey 1980: 13.

[229] Whitehead 1988: 165-166.

> Kji-kinap is making the world. He makes the world and then he takes a rest, lying on the ground, looking around to see what he has done. And there on the ground is a stone image. It looks like a man. Kji-kinap speaks to it.
> 'What are you doing here?' he asks it, but there is no reply ... So Kji-kinap does a thing. He breathes into the image; he blows his breath into the image's mouth, and the stone man becomes alive.[230]

The story probably alludes both to 1 Gen. 2:2-3 and to the second story of creation in 1 Gen. 2:4-7. If the concept of God among the Mi'kmaq resembles Christian ideas, it is probably that this is because they in part *are* Christian beliefs. In this text *mn'tu* is represented as a good power. The word was otherwise often associated with the devil.[231] Rand writes: "Mundu, which is evidently the same as the Manitu or Menedu of the tribes of Canada, is the Micmac word for devil."[232] The Christian missionaries had managed to identify the Mi'kmaq belief in *manitou* with belief in the devil.

When Rand writes about a Mi'kmaq belief in a higher Spirit, the reader should keep in mind that it could be a result of Maillard's successful Catholic mission in the 18th century. Just as Christianity has many names for God ("Father", "Creator", "Lord"), there are among the Mi'kmaq several ways of addressing the Great Spirit:

> They call him Nixkam, which intimates that we are all his offspring, Nixkamich signifying a grandfather or progenitor. Another word so used is Nesulk[233], which is a form of the verb *kesedu* (to create), and literally means, 'He makes us.' 'Our Maker' is, of course, the correct translation. They also call him Ukchesakumou, which signifies the Great Chief.[234]

The different ways of addressing God may reflect the influence of Christian missionaries using traditional Mi'kmaq concepts to better succeed with their mission. A note written by Biard in the 17th century tells us that the word *Nixkam* was used at that time but then as a name of the sun as life-giver:

---

[230] Whitehead 1988: 165.
[231] J. Hewson & B. Francis 1990: 249.
[232] Rand 1894/1971: xliii.
[233] *Kesoolk* according to Elder (1871: 10). Rand uses the same spelling, *Kesoolk*, in his Mi'kmaq grammar (1888/1994: 122).
[234] Rand 1894/1971: xliii.

"They believe in a God, so they say; but they cannot call him by any name except that of the Sun, *Niscaminou*, nor do they know any prayers or manner of worshipping him."[235] The belief in different manifestations of one supreme power is not unusual among Native peoples. Åke Hultkrantz finds it among the Wind River Shoshoni, whose Their Supreme Being *Tam Apö* and other spiritual guardians converge at a higher level, while in practice they have their special functions:

> Thus, the *puha* are approached when a person's mental or physical capacity needs to be improved; that is, when he needs luck in hunting, in war, in love, in overcoming his own or somebody else's sickness. The Supreme Being is prayed to in situations of extreme need or, collectively, in the yearly Sun Dance. The Earth Mother is marginally appealed to at the Sun Dance and in some other connections. She figures more prominently in the newly acquired Peyote cult. The spirits of the atmosphere (thunder etc.) are partly included in the *puha* complex but play a more independent role as providers of rain, thunder and wind.[236]

In the case of Kluskap, the culture hero is sometimes likened with a god but he behaves very much as a man.[237]

Kluskap – A Mi'kmaq?

Kluskap is depicted in the stories as benevolent to the Mi'kmaq people. He teaches them the names of the stars and how to hunt and fish. His power is able to transform the landscape and thus also Mi'kmaq life. Many of the early scholars have translated the word Kluskap as liar.[238] Leland finds this strange, but says that one explanation could be that he has not returned, despite the promise he gave when he departed.[239] Speck says that the epithet of a liar

---

[235] Biard 1616/1959: 134pp. Hewson and Francis (1990: 21) comment on Biard's notions with the following remark: "the pagan Micmacs worshipped the sun ... but their concept was more vague and mysterious; they invoke him rather in the sun, which has another name in Micmac, or by turning in the direction of the rising sun."

[236] Hultkrantz 1971: 69pp; cf. T. Olsson (1999: 76, 82) on the attributes that the Maasai use to represent God in their oral tradition: "there is far from simple correspondence between 'belief' and verbal realization, especially as far as religious literature is concerned ... The various representations of Divinity are thus conditioned by literary genre and speech situation".

[237] Rand 1894/1971: 232.

[238] Leland 1884: 2, Speck 1935, Prince 1902: 34.

[239] Leland 1884: 2.

should not be interpreted as a depreciation, but as a compliment. His lies were never meant to deceive his own people but to outwit their enemies.[240] Prince interprets the meaning of Kluskap in a similar way: "Kulóskap is called the deceiver, not because he deceives or injures man, but because he is clever enough to lead his enemies astray, the highest possible virtue to the early American mind."[241] One of the roles that the trickster had in Amerindian tradition was to play "bad tricks", which thus made him a suitable character to challenge the power of the enemies. Many stories tell us about Kluskap deceiving and fighting the colonizers. Spence connects the word liar to the transformations of Kluskap: "it was bestowed as a compliment to his craftiness, cunning being regarded as one of the virtues by all savage peoples."[242] When Kluskap is around, a canoe can turn into stone, people frozen stiff can be thawed, a simple soup bone can feed a whole group of people, and superior enemies can be defeated. His whole world is thus an "illusion", a "lie" that through his power can be transformed into its opposite. The different attempts by scholars to explain the translation of Kluskap as "liar" or "deceiver" reflect the negative meaning that the word evokes in the English language. It evidently had better connotations in traditional Mi'kmaq society.

The origin of Kluskap is wrapped in mystery. One thing is clear in the texts compiled by Wallis: he is not French or English but Mi'kmaq, since he inhabited the province before the Europeans arrived.[243] He is actually the one who predicts their arrival.[244] In both Rand's and Leland's versions he is born a twin, a widespread motif among Native groups in North America.[245] His mother dies as a result of a choice made by his twin brother. Instead of a natural birth, he wants to enter the world by forcing his way through his mother's side. Kluskap later kills his wicked brother.[246] But it is hard for the reader to grasp Kluskap's family relations, since they vary in the stories. In one story, collected by Wallis, Kluskap lives with his mother, a brother, and a stepfather. He kills his stepfather and transforms his brother into a marten. What happens to his mother is never mentioned.[247] Nor is his real father men-

---

[240] Speck 1935: 6.
[241] Prince 1902: 34.
[242] Spence 1994: 141.
[243] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 331.
[244] Speck 1915: 60.
[245] E.g. among the Seneca (Gill 1982: 20) or the Iroquois (Hultkrantz 1967: 31).
[246] Rand 1894/1971: 339p. Leland (1884: 15p.) gives a more detailed version. The brother is named *malumsis*, or Wolf.
[247] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 322p.

tioned. Kluskap remains unmarried. There are two kinship relations that tend to play an important role in his "everyday life": *Mrs. Mooin* (Bear Woman or Grandmother) and his brother *Abistanaooch* (Little Marten).[248] When Kluskap arrives from the East he brings the old woman along.[249] Together with Little Marten she takes care of the housekeeping in Kluskap's big *wigwam*.

Kluskap lives like a Mi'kmaq, eats, drinks, smokes, sleeps, and dances. In his big *wigwam* visitors are generously received and helped if in need. But Kluskap is obviously not an ordinary human, as he neither gets sick, grows older, nor dies. He is more like a Mi'kmaq shaman, a mediator between the worlds of humans and non-humans. His special relation to animals is shown in his skill as a hunter. This is indicated in the stories of how wild animals come to his cabin as if they were tame, so that he would never lack food.

Among Kluskap's faithful companions are a pair of dogs, which are sometimes described as wolves. Kluskap's power can shrink the dogs so that they fit in a *waltes*-bowl[250], but in the next second transform them into terrible beasts that tear apart Kluskap's enemies.[251] The dogs seem to have the same function for Kluskap as for the Mi'kmaq. They are animals whose purpose is to serve humans. But other animals in the stories were more respected in their own right as alternately zoo- and anthropomorphic persons. The whale is one example of an animal that serves as Kluskap's personal ally. He calls the animal by singing. The words in his song are repeated three times: *Nema-jeechk numeedich* ("let the small fishes see me"). The respectful relation to the whale is expressed in terms of kinship: the whale addresses Kluskap as his grandchild and Kluskap responds by calling him "Grandfather".[252] There were also some birds that seemed to be particularly connected to Kluskap. The

---

[248] Perhaps she is not a relative at all. Kluskap also names the old woman *Noogûmee*, which is a word for an honored relative but also expresses respect for any old woman (Rand 1984/1971: 83). In one case he calls her *kejoo*, mother (p. 254), but Grandmother is the most common address. Sometimes she is referred to as Mrs. Bear, or the Mi'kmaq equivalent *Mooin.*

[249] Rand 1894/1971: 232.

[250] *Waltes* is a kind of dice game that is still played by the Mi'kmaq. Today it is an entertaining, competitive game, but it has had a deeper, divinatory meaning in older Mi'kmaq tradition and is most probably of pre-Columbian origin. Men could use it to predict how a battle would end and women to give strength and power to their men when on a war expedition. It also happened that men lost everything they owned, even their wives, during a game of *waltes* (Wallis & Wallis 1955: 200). The story of the shrinking dog is found in Rand (1894/1971: 284).

[251] Rand 1894/1971: 286.

[252] Rand 1894/1971: 228.

loon, for instance, is depicted as an animal with extra-ordinary power, a characteristic it shares with Kluskap.[253]

Kluskap not only enters into alliances with animals, he is also the master of the wind and weather.[254] He could return life to dead, frozen humans.[255] With Kluskap's help a Mi'kmaq could be granted the privilege of being transformed into a *megumoowesoo*. This person was a kind of super-natural human, who was strikingly beautiful, a successful hunter and a skilled flute player.[256] Kluskap also taught his people to build canoes[257], and, if any Mi'kmaq was in great need of a canoe, he would willingly lend him his own.[258]

The motifs in the stories vary. Kluskap is betrayed by jealous neighbors, who also take the opportunity to kidnap Grandmother and Little Marten. He saves them, sometimes from a snake[259], he chases a beaver, survives dangerous journeys, and transforms a man who wants to live forever into a stone or a tree.[260] His intense hunting of beaver transforms the landscape, and a common, general motif is that the landscape is a product of Kluskap's actions.

Kluskap and Christ

The depiction of Kluskap's alliances with animals and his transformations of the landscape reflect everyday, Mi'kmaq life in a hunting society. But there are several examples in the stories of how the Mi'kmaq conflate their traditional hunting cosmology with Christianity. Mi'kmaq life was not a clear-cut choice between two different lifeworlds but an attempt to live in both.[261] One of the earliest Mi'kmaq narratives of how the world was created clearly shows traces of a century of mission in the province. Christian beliefs had been integrated with traditional conceptions to honor the sun as the source of all

---

[253]Rand 1894/1971: 340, 378pp.

[254] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 325. According to one story, Kluskap stays at the entrance to the land of the *pugulatamutcs* (stone dwarfs), deep in the mountains. In the direction to which Kluskap turns, the wind blows. When he is resting there is no wind. It is impossible to ask him to break his rest, i.e. humans cannot control the power of the weather. He also has a big fire burning, and when he stirs the ashes, it becomes foggy.

[255] Rand 1894/1971: 73.

[256] Rand 1894/1971: 23.

[257] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 330.

[258] Elder 1871: 13.

[259] The serpant *Cheepichcalm* was a common form for the *buoin* to assume when in battle with an enemy (Elder 1871: 12, Parsons 1925: 60, footnote 7).

[260] Fisher 1946: 238.

[261] Cf. Nabokov 1978/1991: 51.

life.[262] It was Le Clercq who transcribed the story, and the allusions to Biblical Creation, Noah's Ark, and the Fall are obvious:

> They say that when the sun, which they have always recognised and worshipped as their God, created all this great universe, he divided the earth immediately into several parts, wholly separated one from the other by great lakes: that in each part he caused to be born one man and one woman, and they multiplied and lived a very long time: but that having become wicked along with their children, who killed one another, the sun wept with grief thereat, and the rain fell from the heaven in such great abundance that the waters mounted even to the summit of the rocks, and of the highest and most lofty mountains. This flood, which, say they, was general over all the earth, compelled them to set sail in their bark canoes, in order to save themselves from the raging depths of this general deluge. But it was in vain, for they all perished miserably through a violent wind which overturned them, and overwhelmed them in this horrible abyss, with the exception, however, of certain old men and of certain women, who had been the most virtuous and the best of all the Indians. God came then to console them for the death of their relatives and their friends, after which he let them live upon the earth in a great and happy tranquillity, granting them there with all the skill and ingenuity necessary for capturing beavers and moose in as great number as were needed for their subsistence. They add also certain other wholly ridiculous circumstances, which I purposely omit, because they do not bear at all upon a secret which is unknown to men, and reserved to God alone.[263]

In the Kluskap stories there are also allusions to Biblical texts. Kluskap could, for instance, be conflated with Noah or even cause the Deluge.[264] In some stories it is difficult to determine what are pre-Christian, Mi'kmaq beliefs and what derives from the Christian mission. When Kluskap leaves England to visit the French King, he does not board a ship but travels either by using his whale-helper or by walking on the water as if it had been land. In one text he

---

[262] J. Ramsey (1977) distinguishes three different kinds of assimilation of Biblical texts among western Native groups: *incorporation*, in which the Biblical text is used only with small changes in details, *adaptation*, in which the text has under-gone a more radical change in order to fit into an already existing model, and *mythopoesis*, in which the integration of Christian and Native traditions is made more freely and something "new" is created (p. 447).

[263] Le Clercq 1691/1968: 84p.

[264] Cf. Leland 1884: 26pp., 110pp. For further examples, cf. Bailey 1937: 35pp.

walks on the water to Newfoundland to fish eel.[265] According to some Mi'kmaq informants a *buoin* could walk *under* the water: "People have walked on the bottom of the Miramichi River from Eel Ground, and some from Red Bank to Burnt Church ... A man walked from Burnt Church to Cape Breton, and back, on the bottom of the ocean ..."[266] But it also happens that a *buoin* walks *on* the water.[267] Kluskap's walks on water may possible belong to an older Mi'kmaq *buoin*-tradition which was reinforced by the Biblical stories about Jesus walking on water.

In the stories of Kluskap different traditions thus meet and clash, making him an ambiguous character.[268] He can be a Mi'kmaq culture hero, or a Messiah and sometimes the different roles become fused. The story of Kluskap and the two Kings states this explicitly: "Gluskap is the same as Jesus Christ, or the Thunder Christ. The Day Christ is the Devil."[269] In another story he is depicted as a mighty *buoin* who competes and measures his power with Jesus. The story ends with a confirmation that Kluskap is the most powerful of men. When the culture hero assumes the role of a new Messiah, he promises to one day return to rescue the Mi'kmaq from oppression.[270]

In the story *Christ creates: Gluskap gives rules*, both Kluskap (Man-made-first) and Adam (Second-man) are created by Christ. But there is a decisive difference between Kluskap, representing the Mi'kmaq, and Adam, who represents the Europeans. The latter is a sinful, "second-man". The problems among the Mi'kmaq are explained as deriving from the fact that they are not following their old traditions, i.e. the rules that were given to them by Kluskap:

> The time that Christ made the world, it was dark, so he made the stars. It was not bright enough then, so he made the moon. Brighter, but not like day, he made the sun then. He put his own shadow on to the water of the bay, so it would rise into the sky to be the sun. He made a man then, took the earth and made a man. The earth was black, when he got the man to walk, he was dark. The man went hunting all the time. He gave him a bow and arrow, to shoot with. One day he saw this man was getting lonesome. He went and made

[265] Parsons 1925: 85.
[266] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 157. Cf. Hagar 1896: 172.
[267] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 160.
[268] Speck (1935: 9) notes that among the Penobscot Kluskap and Jesus are also conflated in some stories.
[269] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 332.
[270] Upton 1979: 154; Rand 1894/1971: 229.

> another man. He got white clay, and this man was a white man. His hair was red.
> Man-made-first, God was speaking to him, saying, 'That is your own, will be with you all the time.' Second-man had a sack, with papers in it. He was named Hadam. They went along. One day they saw an island in the bay. Man-made-first would go ahead all the time. He said, 'We'll go out to the island.' Man-made-first walked along on top of the water. He said to the other, 'Wherever I put my foot, you put your foot.' Second-man said, 'Why does he say that? I am just as much of a man as he.' So he put his foot down in other places and sank down in the water. Man-made-first said, 'You will have to go back now. From the people who come from you, sin will come.' One evening he heard somebody talking to him, 'You go now and give this people the rules. Tell them how to get along. Tell them in the family the girls must go out one door, and boys out the other door (two doors to wigwam then). No courting then. If a boy was standing there, and a girl spoke to him, and he answered her, they were married right there. At that time they were good people. They obeyed their father and mother, wouldn't answer one word back. If they answered back, they would cut their tongue, or if they wouldn't listen to them, they would cut their ears off, clean off. If people didn't follow Gluskap's rules, they would kill them, and burn them ... [271]

The story expresses the conflict raging between representatives of the two cultures, the traditional Mi'kmaq (Kluskap's people) and the Europeans (people of Adam). The attributes of Man-made-first are a bow and an arrow, but of Second-man a bunch of papers, i.e. central symbols for two different cultures. The Fall derives from White society and tempts the Mi'kmaq to desert their traditions. Memories from the older generation and the good old times are combined with a fear that the new society will attract the younger generation and persuade them to forget their traditions.

In Speck's texts from Cape Breton we find the battle between the two masters Christ and Kluskap, who compete like two mighty magicians in order to measure who has the greatest power:

> One time when Gluskap had become the Indian's god, Christ wanted to try him to see if he was fit: so he took Gluskap to the ocean, and told him to close his eyes. Then Christ moved close to

[271] Parsons 1925: 88p.

> the shore an island which lay far out to sea. When Gluskap opened his eyes, he saw it. Christ asked him if he could do as much as that. Then Gluskap told Christ to close his eyes a while. When Christ opened his eyes, he found that Gluskap had moved it back to its place again.[272]

The new and impoverished life on the reserve raised a hope of a better life. One motif in the traditional trickster stories is the trickster's departure. This was a motif that the Mi'kmaq recognized in Jesus' departure from the Apostles, but then with a promise of the Second Coming. In some account Kluskap even after his departure remains available to the Mi'kmaq and helps them when something is threatening them. In other stories he has left them definitively, and in yet others the tradition of a departure has been combined with a return. Christ had promised, on leaving his people, that when he returned he would bring a new world with him. The dream of a coming, promised land, a *utopia*, was nourished on the reserves. But for a long time it was to Kluskap and not to Christ that many Mi'kmaq directed their hopes of better times. Kluskap had left his people, but they would not be deserted forever.

The dream of utopia

The poverty of reserve life at the end of the 19th century provided fertile ground for a revitalization movement. This was a time of radical and rapid changes and the Mi'kmaq were more and more marginalized on the reserves.[273] They tried to defend their rights in different ways but were fighting an unequal battle against their superiors. One of their Chiefs, Paussamigh Pemmeenauweet, turned for help to the one he saw as his equal, "Chief" (Queen) Victoria. In this desperate situation he wrote a petition describing the hardships that the Mi'kmaq had to suffer in their country:

> I cannot cross the great Lake to talk to you for my Canoe is too small, and I am old and weak. I cannot look upon you for my eyes not see so far. You cannot hear my voice across the Great Waters. I therefore send this Wampum and Paper talk to tell the Queen I am in trouble. My people are in trouble ... No hunting grounds − No

[272] Speck 1915: 60p.
[273] Upton 1979: 88pp.

> Beaver − no Otter ... poor for ever ... All these Woods once ours. Our Fathers possessed them all ... White Man has taken all that was ours ... Let us not perish.[274]

Pemmeenauweet realized that his eloquent application must be written down to get the best effect, but he also encloses *wampum*, a traditional prestige good among the Mi'kmaq. His worries are not only about declining resources for the reserves, but also that his people could disappear forever. When a social and economic system collapses and the individual can no longer maintain a feeling of security, a possible reaction could be total resignation. Another option for an oppressed group might be to blame the authorities for corruption and to struggle for a new, utopian society.[275] In this future world the individual and the entire society will be liberated. When all evil has been destroyed, humans will recapture what they have lost and return to an original state of harmony.

The Mi'kmaq shared this hope for a better society with other Native groups during the 19th century. They had all lost their land. Instead of just resigning to their fate, they provided alternative explanations to their situation. There were many messianistic movements in North America, which originated from the meeting between Native groups and Europeans.[276] Some movements were pacifistic and advocated a silent waiting for the return of "The Great Spirit".[277] Others were more militant and demanded that different groups join in mutual efforts to reach their goals. Strong leaders appeared on different reserves and it happened that they in different ways integrated Christian beliefs in their teachings, e.g. messianism and eschatology. The most famous revitalization movement in North America was the Ghost Dance. The instigator, Wovoka, claimed that if only the Indians danced in circles their dead ancestors would return and with them the good old days. The movement came to a tragic end for the Sioux Indians in Wounded Knee, Dakota, when the great chief Sitting Bull and many others were killed.[278]

Wovoka received his prophetic gift and missionary task in a vision in 1889. Some of his followers sewed Ghost Dance shirts that would protect

---

[274] The quotation is from Upton 1979: 89.
[275] Green 1995: 19, Parkhill 1997: 143.
[276] Wallace 1956.
[277] Handsome Lake's reformation of the Iroquois religion is one example.
[278] Hultkrantz 1967: 128.

their owners from bullets if attacked.[279] The belief in protection from White men's bullets during special dances appeared among the Mi'kmaq earlier than this. Rand describes in 1849 how one part of the Mi'kmaq Catholic celebration of the patron St. Anne was to hold a feast, *wigubaltimk*, and dance a special dance, *neskouwadijik*, which derived from an older tradition known as *sakawachkik*. The Chief came from his *wigwam*, sang a song and danced, whereupon the audience joined in the singing and danced with him. According to Rand the dancers felt invulnerable during this occasion: "And they assert that during the ceremony the body of the dancer is impervious to a musket ball; but woe betide the audacious wight who might venture on the experiment of attempting to shoot him."[280] In following their ancient traditions, the Mi'kmaq felt that they could go back to the good old times when they were not accessible for the Whites and their assaults.

It was up to each individual chief to initiate the dancing and there does not seem to have been a specific leader among the Mi'kmaq who was responsible for the political or spiritual resistence against the Europeans. One of Rand's legends, *The Indian Fanatic*, tells us how a man by the name of Abistanaooch, who lived in the district of Miramichi, claimed to be a god and demanded that a whole village believe in him. His maternal uncle tried to rebuke him, and finally a priest helped him persuade the man to apologize for his behavior. The story was told to Rand in 1869 by Stephen Wood, who said that it happened a hundred years ago and that the story was true and well-known among the Mi'kmaq.[281] Abistanaooch seems, however, to have been a marginalized person and the depiction of him in Rand's text is not to his advantage.

The Mi'kmaq apparently lacked a strong political leader as a moral support in these hard times but could instead turn to the Kluskap stories for consolation.[282] The advice to return to the old traditions rather than be seduced by White culture is found in the above-mentioned story *Man-made-first*, which Parsons transcribed in 1925. In the good old days, the message went, everything was in harmony and the young generation obeyed their Elders. The Mi'kmaq had a hard time envisioning what the new life as a settled citizen on

---

[279] Kurkiala 1995: 138p.

[280] Rand 1850: 14.

[281] Rand 1894/1971: 230-231.

[282] Prins (1996: 186p.) says that the stories gave the poor and defeated Mi'kmaq a psychological breathing-space: "They created a fabulous repertoire of stories in which the political reality of powerlessness and helplessness was mysteriously turned around or upside down."

the reserve would lead to. For the older generation memories from days past still remained, but it became harder and harder to pass them on to the younger generation, which became increasingly estranged from the lifeworld depicted in the stories.

The Mi'kmaq were aware that other Native groups were at the same time struggling with similar problems. They saw Kluskap as a savior for them all. His duty was to fight not only intruders in his own territory, but White settlers even in Alberta. In the story *Gluskap assists the Indians in a fight*, the English had denied the Indians the right to kill buffaloes and instead given them other meat of inferior quality. This incident leads to a war between the two groups:

> The Indians took the guns from those of the English whom they killed. After a while, a strange Indian said, 'Come on boys, we will kill all of them.' Under his leadership and guidance, all the English were killed. That man was Gluskap. He is around somewhere, and if the Micmac were to have war with the English, he would come and assist us.[283]

The war story was told to Wallis in 1911-1912. After two hundred years of conflicts with the English, the Mi'kmaq had reluctantly realized that their land was lost. But Kluskap was somewhere out there, prepared to come and rescue them if necessary. Although in a depressed and impoverished condition, the Mi'kmaq would not lose hope:

> Gluskap was present at a big fight which the Indians in northwest Canada had with the English a few years ago. He went about among the Indians and said to them, 'Do not give up; keep on; I will help you.' The Indians won. I do not know where he went after that. He has not been seen since then. He is something like a king for the Micmac. I do not know where he is, but if the Micmac need help, he will come and help them.[284]

The departure of Kluskap

Stories that depict the departure of Kluskap were collected during a period of almost a hundred years. This long period of time affected the character of the

[283] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 336.
[284] Ibid.

departure, its implications, and the formulation of the promised return. When reserve life was established, nostalgia for lost places grew stronger and it happened that the Mi'kmaq blamed themselves for the loss. Says one Mi'kmaq: "I don't blame Gluskap for leaving us. We were disobedient and quarrelsome."[285]

The good old times were gone with the colonization. The land had to be shared with the colonizers. The British had reconstructed their homeland in the New World as if it was merely an extension of the Old.[286] For the Mi'kmaq the challenge was to create meaning in the new reserve life and learn to handle the cultural changes that reconstituted their lifeworlds. Since the changes had been caused by the intruders, a common motif in the stories was that Kluskap had disappeared as a response to colonization and the behavior of the White people. When Kluskap had put the World in order and taught the Mi'kmaq about fishing, hunting, medicine, and a good way of living, he predicted the hard times that would follow colonization:

> 'You are now free to get your living where you like. But there will come a day when you will be prevented' (referring to the game laws and property of the English settlers and present inhabitants). He was correct. Now we may not go out and kill moose and partridges.[287]

The prophecy reflects Mi'kmaq life at the time it was told to Wallis in 1911. Private property, hunting restrictions, new laws, and the restructuring of the landscape had dramatically reduced mobility among the Mi'kmaq. The bitterness over losing their right to the land and the poor conditions on the reserves are often reflected in the stories, but often also combined with revenge, through Kluskap, for the injuries that were inflicted on the Mi'kmaq.

The place of Kluskap's exile became more and more diffuse with time. He could be above the clouds, at the North Pole, or in a country in the West. One day, however, a miracle would happen and Kluskap would return. This was the only hope that the Mi'kmaq had. The coming, Promised Land had no sharp contours, but would be realized in the future when the good life would return to the true owners of the country. The hope, among the Mi'kmaq, was that some places in nature, the "doors" through which Kluskap disappeared,

---

[285] Parsons 1925: 85 footnote 1.
[286] Reid 1995, cf., Anderson 1983.
[287] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 337.

would be reopened so that he could return. The location of these doors varied with local tradition. Caves and mountains were often thought to hide such "doors" to another world.

I shall now present a few examples of stories describing how Kluskap departed from his people and promised to return.

"till they saw him no more"

It is no coincidence that the most grandiose farewell of Kluskap is found in narratives collected by the great Romanticist Leland. This event disturbs the order in Creation because important bonds are destroyed, both between humans and non-humans and between different species of animals. Kluskap's reason leaving his land is that he is tired of the evil found in people and animals. In spite of everything that he has taught them, they are not grateful. He thus arranges a feast and then vanishes. When the Mi'kmaq's "Tower of Babel" falls down it is not only the communication between people that is damage but also the communication between non-humans:

> Now when the ways of men and beast waxed evil they greatly vexed Glooskap, and at length he could no longer endure them, and he made a rich feast by the shore of the great Lake Minas. All the beasts came to it, and when the feast was over he got into a great canoe, and the beasts looked after him till they saw him no more. And after they ceased to see him, they still heard his voice as he sang; but the sounds grew fainter and fainter in the distance, and at last they wholly died away; and the deep silence fell on them all, and a great marvel came to pass, and the beast, who had till now spoken but one language, were no longer able to understand each other, and they fled away, each his own way, and never again have they met together in council. Until the day when Glooskap shall return to restore the Golden Age, and make men and animals dwell once more together in amity and peace, all Nature mourns. And tradition says that on his departure from Acadia the Great Snowy Owl retired to the deep forests, to return no more until he could come to welcome Glooskap; and in those sylvan depths the owl even repeats to the night *Koo-koo-skoos*! which is to say in the Indian tongue, 'Oh, I am sorry! Oh, I am sorry!' And the Loons, who had been the huntsmen of Glooskap, go restlessly up and down through the

> world, seeking vainly for their master, whom they cannot find, and wailing sadly because they find him not.[288]

Leland presents this as a Mi'kmaq story. The grandiose formulations about nature mourning its master and longing for redemption are reminiscent of the Christian, eschatological dream of The New Creation. At the same time it contains elements of a traditional Mi'kmaq story, referring as it does to the animals' alliances with Kluskap and their habit of gathering in councils.

The origin of the text is not as simple as Leland pretends it to be. He has not collected it from a Mi'kmaq, but reveals in a footnote that he found it in Sweetser's (1883) *Maritime Provinces*, where it was presented as one of seven Kluskap stories "without giving either the name of the author or the book from which they were taken."[289] The text in Sweetser's collection was primarily written to attract tourists to the province and has been embroidered with romantic images of "nature children" in order to create a mysterious atmosphere. A more interesting observation about Kluskap is, however, found in the subsequent footnote.[290] According to Mrs. Wallace Brown[291], the Passamaquoddy had informed her that Kluskap upon his departure also brought with him the leaders of every animal species. The animals thus did not merely mourn Kluskap, but also their respective masters.

This version of Kluskap's departure clearly illustrates the difficulties in determining what in the stories is Mi'kmaq/Algonkin and what is a romantic, Western construction. Locations such as Acadia and Lake Minas, the main character Kluskap, and the special role of the loon are elements that do seem to belong to the Mi'kmaq lifeworld. The behavior of the owl and the Indians' ability to understand what it is saying could be the editor's elaborations, since it fits well into romantic beliefs about the magic communication between the "nature child" and the animals. In both Le Clercq's early 17th century text and in the collections compiled by Wallis in 1911-1912, the Mi'kmaq themselves deny that they could speak or understand different animal languages. The Mi'kmaq told Wallis that they composed songs from listening to birds, but

---

[288] Leland 1884: 67-68.

[289] Leland 1884: 68, footnote 1; cf. Sweetser 1883/1890: 106. *Maritime Provinces* is not the only popular work containing collections of Mi'kmaq stories. As earlier mentioned there is also the collection by A. Gordon (1864). According to Parkhill (1997: 44), Sweetser derived some of his texts from Gordon's edition.

[290] Leland 1884: 69, footnote 2.

[291] Brown was an Indian agent for the Passamaquoddy in Maine. She became very interested in their oral tradition and collected a number of stories which she gave to Leland (Leland 1884: ix-x).

stressed that since they did not understand their cries, they could not give the onomatopoetic words any lexical meaning. I have also earlier mentioned how Le Clercq in the 17th century cites a Mi'kmaq explanation to the beaver hunt as a result of deficient communication between them and the beavers.[292] The departure of Kluskap, however, is a common motif in other collections, indicating that it is a Mi'kmaq contribution. But the events surrounding the departure, where Kluskap went, and what will happen in the future, vary between collections and over time. According to some stories he sets out for a land in the West. Perhaps his disappearance represents a parallel to the sun, which everyday rises in the East and sets in the West.[293] In other versions he disappears in the landscape. According to the Cape Breton Mi'kmaq, he had his home in a cave at Cape Dauphin (Dolphin) and would one day in the future return through this cave.[294]

In one of Rand's legends from 1869, Kluskap says farewell to his people and asks a whale to take him to a distant land in the West. They never meet again, but: "[t]he Micmac expect his return in due time, and look for the end of their oppression and troubles when he comes back."[295] In another legend Grandmother and Little Marten stay with Kluskap in his new home, somewhere in the West. Kluskap had first transformed the old woman into a mountain, but promised to let her join him when he arrived in his new country:

> Glooscap now took the old woman and set her down, and telling her to remain there, he turned her into a mountain, which is to be seen to this day; but he told her that when he reached his island home in the far west, she would be there with him. He then left the country, and never came back to it again. He went on to his beauti-

---

[292] Le Clercq 1691/1968: 276pp: "the Indians say that the Beavers have sense, and form a separate nation; and they say they would cease to make war upon these animals if these would speak, howsoever little, in order that they might learn whether the Beavers are among their friends or their enemies."

[293] Hagar (1897: 101) thinks that this is a version of "the world-wide story of the solar hero who comes forth from the cave of night, and returns to the shadow of the west to reappear at to-morrow's dawn, always accompanied by his dogs day and night." Another example is how the culture hero of the Inca, Viracocha, disappeared over the ocean in the West (Mason 1957/1969: 237).

[294] Hagar (1897: 101) writes: "The Micmacs relate that their hero, Glooscap, issued from a cave near Cape Dauphin ... He instructed the people, travelled westward, and finally disappeared. But he is to return some day, issuing again from his eastern cave". According to Speck (1935: 8), the Passamaquoddy and Maliseet said that the Mi'kmaq knew more than them about Kluskap. When Kluskap had finished his mission in New Brunswick, the Penobscot said he went to the Mi'kmaq to prepare his departure.

[295] Rand 1894/1971: 228p.

> ful isle in the west; and when he arrived, and had fixed his dwelling and furnished it, there in her place was found his faithful housekeeper and her little attendant, Marten.[296]

In another version Kluskap stays with *Kuhkw* and *Coolpujot* in his new home. *Kuhkw* is the Earthquake; when he moves under the surface of the earth, it is shaken by his power. *Coolpujot* has no legs.[297] He controls the weather with his breath. Every spring and winter Kluskap turns him with the help of handspikes. In springtime he is turned towards the east and in autumn towards the west. In the same story Kluskap's home is presented as a Christian paradise: if the Mi'kmaq behave well they may go there when they die. It is still possible to visit Kluskap while alive, but it is a dangerous and uncomfortable journey. In some cases people die, especially when suffering from moral weakness.[298] In one of Speck's Cape Breton collections, Kluskap departed just prior to the European arrival, as he had to make room for the Christian God. He promises, however, that he will always help his people. In this version he did not disappear in the West, for when Peary reaches the North Pole he meets Kluskap sitting "at the top of the Pole":

> Again he said, 'From now on, if there should ever be a war between you and any other people, I shall be back to help you.' He is there now, busy making bows, arrows and weapons in preparation for some day when the white man may assail the Micmac.[299]

In Wallis' texts the departure of Kluskap is surrounded with Christian beliefs. Not until the last day would everything be fulfilled for humans: "Until the end of the world, people will not know what Gluskap has done; they may know part of it, but not the whole of it."[300] Wallis' informant Meuse thought that Kluskap stayed somewhere north of Baie des Chaleurs, while Newell gives him a more heavenly home on the other side of the clouds.[301] If they could stand the sound from Thunder, the Mi'kmaq could still visit him to have their wishes fulfilled. In Rand's legends the Mi'kmaq desire a long life, good

---

[296] Rand 1894/1971: 293.
[297] Rand 1894/1971: 232p. The meaning of Coolpujot is "rolled over by handspikes".
[298] Ibid., cf. Leland 1884: 68-69.
[299] Speck 1922: 148pp.; 1915: 60.
[300] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 325.
[301] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 325, 328.

hunting, or a beautiful wife, but in Wallis' collection from 1911-1912 modern society has introduced a new wish, i.e. money. Reserve life had taught the Mi'kmaq that a good life in the White world can be bought for money.

Wallis' informants were convinced that Kluskap could return at any time, especially if they were threatened. During Wallis' stay in Burnt Church in 1911, tensions arose on the reserve. The Mi'kmaq told Wallis that if there should be a real crisis, they would have Kluskap on their side.[302] One of the informants spoke of the important role Kluskap would play on the last day:

> When the last day comes he will fight with the devil. If Gluskap wins, very good; if he loses, very hard will be our luck. If he wins, he will then go to hell, five times, to rescue people. If he loses it will be bad for us.[303]

In many stories Kluskap gets the last word, but a sinister feeling had grown among the Mi'kmaq that the only thing that the future could offer them was insecurity and loss. There was a possibility that Kluskap would lose the battle. If he was defeated by the mighty English, what would then happen to his people? The story above illustrates the gloomy prospects that they had to live with. It is not from their graves that the Mi'kmaq would be summoned to witness the last judgment. In death as in life they are in places where they do not want to be. One (the reserve) has been forced upon them by the White authorities, the other (Hell) by missionaries.

In a later (1930) version of the departure, Kluskap not only warns that White men will come but also what will happen to the Mi'kmaq if they do not follow the advice he gives them. For the disobedient there waits a place ruled by eternal darkness. The belief in Hell and a coming judgment day are clear echoes of Christian eschatology:

> 'There will be white people,' said Kluskap, 'who will come and take this forest away from you. But I am going north, to make a place for you where no white person can ever come. No white person shall ever enter there. And this place will be a place where you may not come while you are alive. You will only travel there after you die on the Earth World.'
> 'I am telling the People to act always as they should. Those of you

[302] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 154.
[303] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 332.

> who do not act as you should must remember that there is a place of Darkness Forever. Those of the People who do not act as they should will forever have to hunt their game in darkness. There will be no sun for them'.[304]

This version differs from earlier stories. It is no longer possible to visit Kluskap or have one's wishes in life fulfilled. Only after death can the Mi'kmaq hope to meet their Savior. But Kluskap promises to win the final battle and return as a Messiah to wake people up from their slumber and take them to a country where no tormentors can reach them. The story continues:

> Kluskap told the People that none of them would live to see the ending of the Earth World.
> 'Do not worry,' he said to them. 'I will come. I will raise you from the burial mounds.[305] I will call you down from the crotch of the trees. I will call you down from the scaffolds of the air, to go north with me, to live where no white person shall ever come.'

The Kluskap stories are examples of how difficult conditions for the Mi'kmaq prompted them to creatively adapt to the new order. Apocalyptic texts can often be explained with reference to the epoch that generated them. Geertz' analysis of Hopi prophecies assumes that they are reflections of actual, political and social contexts. They take contemporary events and frame them in traditional structures, interpretations, and values. The prophecies are told as if they were predicting something ("anterior precognition"), but are actually explanations after the event ("posterior precognition").[306] Apocalyptic thoughts can be generated in a system that is threatened by either internal or external conflicts:

> These communities or groups tend to codify or restore their cultural identities or traditional value-systems in opposition to rival communities or groups through revelatory systems of ideas, which verbally manifest themselves by way of actualizing and reinterpreting

---

[304] Whitehead 1988: 215.
[305] This alludes to the traditional, Mi'kmaq way to bury the dead. One method to preserve the body was to place it on a scaffold in order to dry it in the sun (Whitehead 1988: 238).
[306] Geertz 1992: 7.

> traditional values, motifs or themes from religious literature or ritual with reference to the contemporaneous situation.[307]

The conflation of Kluskap with a coming Messiah provided consolation in everyday life. The good old days represented by the culture hero were thus conflated with hopes for the future. With the culture hero as a Messiah, old traditions could one day be restored and the lost order re-established. The Mi'kmaq should not despair if they did not see any immediate solution, since they would all, when the time came, be taken from their graves, redeemed and brought together in a new and peaceful world.

Since many Mi'kmaq at the turn of the century were Catholics, it was problematic to determine who in the future would have the ultimate responsibility for them. It was not evident to all Catholics that Kluskap would be their leader:

> He left them and went to the west. We believe he is living yet in this world. He'll stand as long as the world stands. The last people he lived with he told he was not going back to rule them. He told them that sometime they would get religion.[308]

Parsons writes in her introduction to the Kluskap stories that the Mi'kmaq still in the 1920s talked about Kluskap as their best "Grandfather". But while Rand in the 1850s writes that the belief in Kluskap is still very much alive, Parsons says that in her time there is no longer a larger body of stories about him. Between Rand's and Parsons' collections nearly eighty years had passed. Parsons says that the Kluskap stories had turned pale during the years. The ones that were still being retold referred to this or that anecdote, but they did not add up to a longer narrative.[309]

The decades passed and the Mi'kmaq stayed on their reserves. Living on small "islands" (or "left-overs") of the indigenous order, suspended in mainstream society, they gradually started to participate in the modern, Canadian nation. Hunting and gathering was transformed from the main subsistence activity into a complement to the welfare system. The hope of Kluskap's return was talked about less and less as a time when traditional life would be

[307] Olsson 1983: 31.
[308] Parsons 1925: 90.
[309] Parsons 1925: 85.

re-established. The dream of the mighty and triumphant culture hero lingered on but it began to fade.

The Mi'kmaq's traditional lifeworld		The colonizer's lifeworld
Virgin land	Reserve	Cultivated land
Hunting/gathering	Welfare + hunting and fishing	Agriculture/industrialization
Chief (*sagamo*)	Indian Agents	Federal government
Kluskap/animism	Catholicism/oral tradition (Kluskap)	Christianity/dichotomy nature versus culture
Ritual addressed to nature, e.g. bone ceremonialism and offerings	St. Anne's Day	Churches/ritual on clearly defined, holy places

The ideology and political/social/economic structures introduced by the colonizers had gradually invaded the Mi'kmaq lifeworld, and the stories of Kluskap were generated in the hybridized interface between the traditional and the new as an expression of both assimilation and resistance.

Epilogue

Nearly eighty years had passed between Rand's early Kluskap stories and the above-mentioned narrative collected in 1930. It is understandable that these later stories do not mention one of Kluskap's main attributes, his *wigwam*. There were not many *wigwams* in the Mi'kmaq's new life as settled reserve citizens. To the limited extent possible in their marginalization, the group had begun to take part in the modernization of Canadian society.

When Wilson Wallis returns in the 1950s to document the changes in Mi'kmaq life, he finds that Mi'kmaq children are in school and that life on the reserves resembles everyday, Canadian life anywhere. Wallis was interested in seeing if the stories had survived. Did they disappear with modernization? If not, how were they told in the 1950s? The 19th century had meant adopting a settled life, but it was a very local lifeworld that they inhabited. In the

1950s, however, they were daily reminded of the colonizers. The Europeans were the main authors of the new order that the Mi'kmaq had to adapt to.

In the earliest transcriptions of Mi'kmaq oral tradition, two lifeworlds are intertwined, i.e. the traditional hunter and gatherer society and the colonial reserve system. One of these worlds contains the familiar landscape that surrounds the reserves, charged with Kluskap stories and personal memories. The other world was defined by the colonizers. It is important to emphasize that the Kluskap stories were generated from this specific point in time but would be recorded as Mi'kmaq oral tradition. The structure and content of the oral stories were transformed when edited into written texts, partly because they were influenced by the author and his context, partly because they would be read by other people than the original audience. But despite various editions and the White authors' ambitions, the texts are not just products of an editor's creative imagination. They clearly still convey a voice that inalienably belongs to the Mi'kmaq.

When the Mi'kmaq speak about *Megâmaage* − the home of the Mi'kmaq − it is from their perspective that the stories of places and events are told. The stories immerse Kluskap in everyday Mi'kmaq life, and the Kluskap character of the 19th century is more interesting as a key to the Mi'kmaq lifeworld than as an example of the trickster motif. A lifeworld is not a static room but open to changes. The 19th century was a period when reserve life was being established, and the Kluskap stories became a way of coping with and interpreting these changes. The ideology and political/social/economic structures introduced by the colonizers had gradually invaded the Mi'kmaq lifeworld, and the stories of Kluskap were generated in the hybridized interface between the traditional and the new as an expression of both assimilation and resistance. Mi'kmaq stories depict the reserve system in another way than does the colonizers' historiography, and they interpret Catholic dogmas differently than do the papist messengers, but they cannot be dismissed as mere nonsense stories reduced to "folklore". Precisely through the strength and comfort which they granted to suffering Mi'kmaq, they were a powerful source of resistance to the hegemony of White society.

IV. INTERLUDE (1930-1970)

Kluskap in dormancy

When the ethnographer Wilson Wallis returned to the Atlantic provinces in 1953, this time with his wife Ruth, nearly forty years had passed since he did his fieldwork in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and on Prince Edward Island. The couple would, during a period of three weeks, document the changes the Mi'kmaq had gone through since 1911-12. The short stay did not allow longer trips to visit different reserves, so they focused their studies on Burnt Church in New Brunswick and Shubenacadie in Nova Scotia.

Wallis found that the changes in Canadian society also had become part of the Mi'kmaq history. Some Mi'kmaq had participated in the Second World War, old age pensions and the family allowance had been introduced, children went to compulsory school and all kind of papers were found in the homes, from newspapers to comics and mail-order catalogs.[1] The first obvious difference Wilson Wallis noticed was the houses. Gone were the *wigwams* from his stay in 1911-12 and the only one he now saw had been changed into a souvenir shop. The old shacks from the turn of the century had been restored or replaced with newly built houses. The furniture looked like that in Canadian homes. Extra resources had been given to those Mi'kmaq who had participated in the war. Eskasoni and Shubenacadie had grown into larger communities by aid from the state, war veteran money and the government's centralization policy. There was also a church, a school, a community building, a medical center and a number of stores on the reserves.

It was still hard for the reserve inhabitants to get a steady income. Families were no longer going for longer stays in the forest to fish or hunt, but preferred to stay home in their modern houses. Some made their money last longer by selling Christmas trees, picking blueberries or plaiting baskets. Some left the reserves to pick potatoes in Maine or to work in factories in Connecticut.[2] All had Christmas trees and the children waited most excitedly for Santa Claus. Birthdays and Mother's/Father's Day had recently begun to be celebrated.

---

[1] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 270.

[2] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 279.

But Wallis also noted that there was a clear border between the reserve and the main society. The White society had not given the Mi'kmaq the right to vote (if they were not war veterans), but it had freed them from paying taxes. The Mi'kmaq language was still spoken, and the language, and the feeling of belonging to a special group of people gave them a certain pride. An increased interest for the main society and a wish to have more of White men's material standard were obvious among the younger generation, who more than in earlier times had some influence over what happened on the reserves. A young Mi'kmaq, who had become Band Chief, expressed his frustration over the unfair distribution of resources between the Whites and the Mi'kmaq: "The Indians used to own all of North America. What they gave to the whites was worth millions, perhaps billions, of dollars."[3] The injustice of being restrained in a country that the Mi'kmaq felt originally belonged to them was clearly noticeable when they entered into conflicts with Canadian laws. A man had been put in jail since he had fished salmon on his own reserve in Restigouche. The laws forbid namely salmon fishing in Restigouche River.[4]

The younger generation's interest in modern Canadian society was the main reason why traditional knowledge ran the risk of being lost. At the beginning of the 20th century the Mi'kmaq feared their traditional enemies *bil'wedg*, the Mohawks, who were allied with the British. In the 1950s no one knew who *bil'wedg* were. They were only spoken about in one story and then as the *caughnawags*. The pre-European dice game *waltes* was not played any longer and nobody could give the names for the various parts of a birch *wigwam*. Few Mi'kmaq wore their festival dress with roots in both French and Mi'kmaq tradition. It had been replaced by modern, Western "evening dress". Wallis was told that the traditional dress was not even put on at the greatest feast of them all, St. Anne's Day. A woman said that she did not like the cone shaped cap, since it made her feel all shut in. She preferred a headband and feather decorations. It had happened that younger Mi'kmaq laughed at the dress and a woman from New Brunswick did not think it looked like a real Indian dress but felt, when using it, like she had been in a show.[5]

The beliefs in magical power and spirits had been a matter of generations. The older generation still remembered who *pugulatamutc*, the stone dwarfs,

[3] Wallis & Wallis 1953: 125.
[4] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 278.
[5] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 282.

were. Some thought they lived near the reserves, while others said they had gone to more distant places. The younger generation conflated Mi'kmaq traditional beliefs with Western fairy tale figures. When the Wallis couple asked the twelve year old Leo about *pugulatamutc* they got the following answer:

> Leo: 'Pugulatamutc? You mean the little fellers?'
> 'Yes. The Dwarfs.'
> Leo: 'There was this queen and then there came Snow White ...'
> 'Did you ever see a dwarf?'
> Leo: 'My grandfather did. He used to see a little man in the daytime, singing and dancing around the house. And I've seen a dwarf too. I saw him in front of the hardware store in Newcastle. He was only that high. He was twelve years old and he'd never grown.'[6]

The boy's answer shows that he is trapped between his grandfather's oral tradition and the modern Disney animated movie of Snow White and the seven dwarfs. When Leo's grandfather told him about the *pugulatamutc*, the old man refers to the Mi'kmaq folklore, but for the modern Leo this world is a pale shadow compared to the Disney world. Most probably Leo had seen the movie of Snow White (from 1937), and if not, he most certainly had read about the dwarfs in comics. Wallis expresses his disappointment over how much the old stories had faded away and says that the old art of storytelling had gone into the grave with the older generation. Many of the long, richly embroidered stories had been transformed into synoptic variants. If everybody knew about the Kluskap legends at the end of the 19th century, and the Mi'kmaq spoke about the return of Kluskap, the modern stories were only a short account of how the huge beaver dam was destroyed and what implications it had for the landscape. One reason that the story about the beaver hunt still was kept alive could be that it was found both in schoolbooks and in the tourist literature.[7] Wallis said that, according to the Grand Chief on Cape Breton, Kluskap would return with the *pugalatamutc* and protect the Mi'kmaq, if they were attacked by White men. But the hope of the culture hero's return on the other hand, had faded away at this time.

The Mi'kmaq had also become interested in other Native groups in the 1950s. The knowledge about them and their traditions was, however, still

[6] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 305.
[7] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 481.

vague. A man in his thirties showed a handkerchief with a picture of a Plain Indian in a warbonnet to Wallis and complained at the same time that the Mi'kmaq had no traditions. A woman showed photos of Chippewa and Dakota with comments that Indians are all the same. When Wallis told them about the Chippewa custom to have a menstrual hut the women exclaimed, unaware of the Mi'kmaqs' own traditions: "These must be wild Indians. Like Eskimos". Wallis noted that the Mi'kmaq knew where their tribe members in the territory lived, but there was no all-embracing Mi'kmaq nationalism. The younger men expressed their pride over the strength and the land resources their ancestors possessed, but it was only the older men that said a *wigwam* was healthier than a modern house. When it came to the material culture the younger Mi'kmaq's attitude was: "The Good Old Days! − So what!".[8]

According to Wallis, school and the Roman-Catholic Church were the main causes of the acculturation and the changes that the Mi'kmaq underwent during the first half of the 20th century. The church contributed to a lot of social gatherings. It arranged bingo, a highly appreciated amusement, on Sunday afternoons to get money for its work. The compulsory school had become the most important institution for the younger generation to obtain knowledge that earlier was taught by practice or through the Elders' stories.

Whitewash

One of the most effective means a society possesses to acculturate a group of people is to take control over the knowledge transmission to the children. The first missionaries in the 17th century had already realized how important it was for them to socialize the children and used them therefore in the missionary work. But it was not always easy to educate the Mi'kmaq children. The main problem was that the families regularly moved during the different seasons. The missionary Biard often complains over the Mi'kmaq's nomadic lifestyle, since their travels made it impossible for the group to regularly attend the church services and partake in the Communion. Neither could they join in some of the most important Christian feasts, nor have continuous teaching in Christianity.[9] It is clearly written in the missionary stories that the Mi'kmaq did not long for a settled life, since they could not see any benefits with it. Le

[8] Wallis & Wallis 1953: 120.

[9] Jaenen 1976: 54, Biard 1616/1953: 143: "the Canadians are a wandering people … therefore they cannot ordinarily attend mass nor prayers nor public services, nor hear sermons, nor receive the sacraments nor have priests with them."

Clercq said he did not understand how the Mi'kmaq could prefer their nomadic living instead of a French lifestyle.[10]

The missionaries tested different strategies to at least keep the children at the missionary stations. Biard realized that if he was to succeed with this ambition, it was not only a matter of making the faith itself attractive and understandable to them. A more effective way was to implement it in the body. The solution was to use the ritual. He therefore let the Mi'kmaq children work as helpers in processions and in the services.[11] The missionary Le Jeune was very radical for his time when he said that the Indian children had the same capacity to manage their studies as the French children had. He thus gave room for them in the ordinary schools. But a new problem arose and this time it was embedded in the structure of the school. Many early missionary reports bear witness of the Mi'kmaq parents' limitless love for their children and their free way of bringing them up.[12] In French schools the Mi'kmaq children became acquainted with a system they were not used to and thus hard for them to handle: discipline, rigidity, routine learning and a competitive atmosphere. The combination of longing for parents and relatives, loneliness and a disorientation in life made many children run away from school to join their parents in the forest or along the coasts. Attempts to teach the Huron and Algonkin children in a missionary station in Sillary, where some converts had been given land, gave the same results as in the Mi'kmaq case. The children got tired of school and returned to the old way of living.[13] A leader for an Ursuline school wrote the following to her son in the 17th century to explain why she had failed in "civilizing" the nature children:

> We find docility and intelligence in them, but when we are least expecting it they climb over our enclosure and go to run the woods with their relatives, where they find more pleasure than in all the

[10] Le Clercq 1968: 125.

[11] *Jesuit Relations* I959, II: 53: "However, it comforts us to see these little Savages, though not yet Christians, yet willingly, when they are here, carrying the candles, bells, holy water and other things, marching in good order in the processions and funerals which occur here. Thus they become accustomed to act as Christians, to become so in reality in his time." Cf. *Jesuit Relations* 1959, II: 91.

[12] Lescarbot (1609/1928: 151) even criticized the French women who let wet-nurses bring up their children or who sent the little ones to the countryside to take the opportunity to have a good time themselves, when alone in the town: "being willing to set themselves at ease, free from the children's noise, do send them into the country, where peradventure they be changed or given to bad nurses, whose corruption and bad nature they suck with their milk ... The savage women bear a greater love than that towards their young ones, for none but themselves do nourish them."

[13] Jaenen 1976: 168p.

> amenities of our French houses. Savage nature is made that way: they cannot be constrained and, if they are they become melancholy and their melancholy makes them sick. Besides, the Savages love their children extraordinarily, and when they know that they are sad they will do everything to get them back ...[14]

When the Mi'kmaq lost in the war with the English, they were forced to submit to the new colonizers. Their existence as a defeated tribe was not just a matter for the Anglican Church anymore, which always had wanted to get hold of their souls. The problem of what to do with the indigenous people from now on also became a matter for the province authorities. The government's way of handling the "Mi'kmaq problem" was much the same as the church's way. A permanent settlement was necessary in order to educate and assimilate the tribe to what the English saw as the model and goal: the advanced and civilized English society. The solution to the Indian problem was given in the Indian Act of 1842. The Mi'kmaq would be assimilated to the White society with the help of the English language, customs and traditions.[15] Land would be set aside for their living, and money would be given to the reserves to build a school, a church and a house for the Band Chief. The reserve life was born.

Joseph Howe, the father of the document, became the first Commissioner for Indian Affairs in the province. He started to bring the Mi'kmaq children to school. But parents disapproved of the education. They wanted themselves to transfer their culture to the children and were of the opinion that being in school would break the natural bonds between the children, their kin and the rest of the Mi'kmaq group.[16] They unexpectedly got support from Abraham Gesner, who later became the Commissioner on the mainland of Nova Scotia. He understood the disappointment the Mi'kmaq felt when they had lost their land and the silent resistance they showed towards the hard assimilation policy. Gesner made some improvements for them, but was replaced by the skeptical William Chearnley. Wallis writes how still in 1911 there was a resistance among conservative Mi'kmaq to the White education system: "The natural way ... is the Indian way".[17] The older generation thought education

[14] Jaenen 1976: 173-174.
[15] Ralstone 1981: 484.
[16] Ralstone 1981: 485.
[17] Wallis & Wallis 1953: 124.

was the root to the split between generations and looked upon a person who could read and write more with distrust than respect.

The Mi'kmaq children between seven and sixteen were put in compulsory school in 1920. The family allowance was introduced in 1945 and could be withdrawn if the children did not attend school. The goal was to teach the children English and nearly all Mi'kmaq (except some in the older generation) could speak it in the 1950s. They could now read English literature, and the Canadian newspapers made them more familiar with Canadian society and White culture. A more positive outlook on school began to grow when the Mi'kmaq realized that education could give better possibilities to partake in society.

The residential schools became the most efficient way to assimilate Indian groups to the new life. One of these schools was built in Shubenacadie, in Nova Scotia. The authorities saw in this project a unique chance to as quickly as possible make the Mi'kmaq into Canadians. It could, in a totally different way than the ordinary school, have full control over the pupils, since it served both as a school and as a home for the children. A report in *The Casket* 1941 is full of optimism for the project:

> At Shubenacadie there is a school that in neatness, in equipment and a balanced education program stands out from any other in Nova Scotia. But, white children cannot attend it. It is for the descendants of a race whose national sport less than 150 years ago was looking for white men's scalps.
> The Shubenacadie Indian Residential School is a marvel of efficiency. Acquiring a knowledge of the traditional 'reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic is only one side of the story. When students leave this institution − and they all leave at 16 − they are armed not only with knowledge but with several years of good practical training in how to make a living.[18]

Most of the Mi'kmaq who went to Shubenacadie did not share this optimism. Two thousand young people would be "White-washed" there during the years 1929-1967.[19] Some of the children arrived at school when they were five years old and stayed for ten years. According to the Department of Indian Affairs, the boarding school was meant to give the "underprivileged"

[18] *The Casket*, 28 August 1941.
[19] Prins 1996: 185.

Mi'kmaq children a better chance in life. To be underprivileged was defined as being an orphan, living too isolated for regular school attendance or in one or another way being neglected by the family. The children could also be sent to the residential school if they had failed in the ordinary schools. The Indian Agent in each district decided which of the children that would fit into the above-mentioned criteria. It was, of course, easier to choose the orphans or the ones who lived isolated, than to define who was "neglected". A Mi'kmaq home that seemed "not suitable" to the Indian Agent, could be fully accepted among the Mi'kmaq as a proper home.[20]

The parents were forced to sign a contract before the children moved, but not all of them were aware of what they actually were signing. In the contract they pledged themselves to leave the charge of their children until they were 16 years old to the headmaster of the school, and it was not always up to the parents to decide when their children could get permission to leave the school. The RCMP (The Royal Canadian Mounted Police) often had to bring back those children who did not return after a vacation. It did not help if the parents supported the children's wish to stay home. They were then brought back by force. The authorities threw suspicions on the reasons the parents gave to defend their children (they were sick, they had been beaten by their teacher, they were needed at home) and rejected the children's wishes to stay home. One could read between the lines the despair the parents felt when they became aware of how much their children suffered in school.[21] Instead of taking the risk that their children would be forced to return to school, parents chose to go underground with them.

---

[20] *New Maritimes*, March/April 1992, p. 9. The following reason could be mentioned: "The parents ... are living but they are very poor, and of a roaming nature."

[21] A father from New Brunswick got his application denied when he tried to take his son away from school. He then appealed directly to the headmaster (*New Maritimes*, March/April 1992, p. 11): "sorry to say that [he] will not be going back to Shubenacadie School any more. I can send him to school here ... there is no use of me writing the Indian agent ... as he never answers my letters anyway." The headmaster answered that the child must be brought back to school again and the application for not going back must be handled by the Indian Agent. Since this had not worked before, the father had a medical certificate that said that the boy had been beaten and that this was the reason for him to not return. The headmaster denied the punishment and writes: " 'This is the usual line of the Indian,' and explained that while he was indifferent regarding the return of the boy, it was important to impress upon the father the necessity of doing 'what he is told' and following regulations" (ibid.). A woman also tried to take away her girl from school. She got help with an application in which was written that this mother "says that she 'loves' her children". The quotation marks at "loves" indicate that the authorities were suspicious of the parent. The Indian Agent rejected the application with the motivation that the only reason for the mother to want her child home again was to be helped with the cooking and to look after the younger children (ibid.).

The residential school was built with aid from the Department of Indian Affairs and was run by a religious organization, the "Sisters of Charity". Nuns took care of the teaching and a Catholic priest was the headmaster of the school.[22] Many of the children forgot their native language in the totally English-speaking environment. Isabelle Knockwood writes in her biography *Out of the Depths*[23] about her experiences as a pupil at Shubenacadie Indian Residential School. The school was a radical break from the life she had as a child on the reserve. Poverty and starvation constantly threatened the family but, according to Knockwood, much of the old tradition was still kept alive when she was a child. The traditional lifeworlds were seriously challenged for the first time by the boarding schools. Knockwood remembers how as a child she could sit for hours and listen to the stories of the Elders. These were not only stories about mythical beings, but stories in which she learned a lot about nature. The children were taught about herbal medicine, how the animals lived, and what hunting methods that worked best depending on the weather conditions. The stories combined an ethic of how children should behave, and if they failed they might be reprimanded by having to listen to a suitable passage from a story.[24] The older brothers and sisters were expected to look after the younger ones. But many of these close ties were broken when the children came to the residential school. Some of the younger siblings stayed on the reserves and did not meet the older ones for years, and at the school the children were separated into boys' and girls' units.

Not only the ties between the family members were broken, but also the connections to the traditional Mi'kmaq life and to the places the children felt were their home. The children often went with their parents in the forest to collect medicinal plants and tree-bark for the baskets, or picked berries for the family's winter supply. Sometimes they went on longer trips and stayed outdoors for the night. It was common for Knockwood and her family to be in

---

[22] *Atlantic Insight*, Feb. 1988, p. 21. The headmaster and the nuns were from the Roman Catholic Ecclesiastical Authorities in Halifax (*New Maritimes*, March/April 1992, p. 8).

[23] The title is from a prayer the children had to learn in school: "Out of the depths I have cried unto thee O Lord. Lord hear my voice."(Knockwood 1992: 101), cf. *MN*, August 1992, p. 12, and Rita Joe (1996: 48), who also got her education at the Shubenacadie residential school.

[24] Knockwood 1992: 15. Petrone (1990: 10-11) gives an example from Ojibwa 1830, in which George Copway tells: "Night after night for weeks have I sat and eagerly listened to these stories. The days following, the characters would haunt me at every step, and every moving leaf would seem to be a voice of a spirit ... These legends have an important bearing on the character of the children of our nation. The fire-blaze is endeared to them in after years by thousands of happy recollections. By mingling thus, social habits are formed and strengthened."

the forest for days. Her memories about the knowledge she and her brothers and sisters got by partaking in her parents' work were intertwined with the memories of the security she felt when she lived close to her dearest ones:

> When we were taken into the bush as tiny children we began learning about the environment from the cradle-board strapped to our mother's back or from sleeping and waking up in a hammock between two trees ... Upon wakening in the morning, our first sight was usually the branches and leaves silhouetted against the ever-changing sky and the last thing before the dream world took over, we saw the moon and stars and the milky way of the night world.[25]

> We always felt safe and protected everywhere we went. After carefully selecting the campsite, my father made a frame for the lean-to out of logs which he covered with branches of trees with the leaves left on. My mother made the beds out of spruce boughs, while we kids carried the drinking water from the spring and gathered the firewood. At night, we slept in front of the campfire with the night sky overhead. Daddy would sit at one side of the lean-to and tend the fire while Mom sat on the other side with us five kids in between.[26]

Knockwood's parents realized, however, that the traditional Mi'kmaq knowledge about the forest and the coastal life did not give admission to the main society. They thus chose to put their daughter and some of their other children in Shubenacadie Residential School in September 1936. It was a hard time for the children to acclimatize to these completely different conditions. Every morning started with an early Mass that lasted for an hour. Nuns or monks led the education. Classroom lectures replaced the stories of the Elders and the primary goal was to make the Mi'kmaq children forget their former life and instead become assimilated into the English community. The children were thus strictly forbidden to speak the Mi'kmaq language. The teachers' instructions give clearly the rules for how the acculturation should proceed:

> **Language**: Every effort must be made to induce pupils to speak English and to teach them to understand it. Insist on English during even the supervised play. Failure in this means wasted efforts.

[25] Knockwood 1992: 19.
[26] Knockwood 1992: 17.

Reading: Pupils must be taught to read distinctly. Inspectors report that Indian children either mumble inaudibly or shout their words in spasmodic fashion. It will be considered a proof of the incompetence of a teacher if pupils are found to read "parrot fashion," i.e. without an understanding of what they read. Pupils should understand as they read. The sentence is the unit of thoughts. Bend every effort to obtain intelligent reading.
Calisthenics: Exercises, frequently accompanied by singing, to afford variation during work and to improve physique. Lay stress on physical activities that will strengthen the chest and neck. Special emphasis on outdoor group games and supervised play.
Vocal music: Simple songs and hymns. The themes of the former to be interesting and patriotic. The tunes bright and cheerful.
Religious instructions: Scriptural reading, the Ten Commandments, The Lord's Prayer, The Life of Christ, etc.
Ethics: In the primary grades, instill the qualities of obedience, respect, order, neatness and cleanliness. Differentiate between right and wrong, cultivate truthful habits and a spirit of fair play. As the pupils become more advanced, inculcate as near as possible in the order mentioned, independence, self-respect, industry, honesty, thrift, self-maintenance, citizenship and patriotism. Discuss charity, pauperism, Indian and white life, the evils of Indian isolation, enfranchisement. Explain the relationship of the sexes to labour, home and public duties, and labour as the law of existence.
Sanitation: Great care must be exercised by the teacher to see that the schoolroom is kept thoroughly clean. The floors should be swept daily and scrubbed frequently. Ventilation should receive earnest attention. The air in the schoolroom should be completely changed during recess and at the noon hour, even in the coldest weather, by opening of windows and doors. Spitting on the floor, or inside the school building, should not be allowed.
General: Instruction is to be direct, the voice and blackboard the principal agents. The unnecessary use of textbooks is to be avoided. Do not classify students in advance of their ability.
– Instructions to teachers printed on Residential School registers[27]

Mi'kmaq children were not used to the hard discipline and were constantly afraid of being physically punished if they failed in their studies.[28] It was mostly reading aloud that caused problems, since some of the English pho-

[27] Knockwood 1992: 47p.
[28] *MMNN*, 1992, no. 11, p. 9.

nemes did not have any correspondent in the Mi'kmaq language. Words with th (as in mother and father) became "mudder" and "fadder", and were immediately corrected. The teacher's unacquaintedness with Mi'kmaq tradition often led to misunderstandings. Knockwood remembers how a nun violently shook a girl and screamed at her to look at her teacher when she was addressed. The nun did not know it was assumed to be very arrogant for a Mi'kmaq child to stare directly into the eyes of an Elder. In certain subjects, especially religion and history, shame was often combined with learning, since Mi'kmaq children were taught they had a pagan and uncivilized past. They had to sing songs with for them incomprehensible texts like "Columbus sailed across the sea and found this land for you and me".[29]

School also meant a lot of hard practical work, since it was built together with a huge farm that was to produce food for the children and the staff. The farm was 150 acres and had 25 milking cows. Only three men were employed at the farm and half the day the children had to work with practical things.[30] Mi'kmaq children should in all possible ways be saved from what White society saw as uncivilized behavior and this also included Mi'kmaq traditional subsistence and food culture.[31] Under the guidance of a White staff the former hunting and gathering children would now become farmers. The boys had to milk the cows, sow and harvest, chop wood, and repair little things. The girls had to work in the kitchen to learn a different food culture than the one they were used to. They also learned to sew and supported the soldiers in the Second World War by knitting stockings for them.[32] But the practical work was heavy. The hard work in the kitchen could start at four in the morning. This heavy work at the farm and in the kitchen always threatened the time that was set aside for lessons. Many parents complained that the schoolwork thus was neglected and it was for the education, not for the practical work, they had put their children in school. It was first in the year 1961 that a federal law came that guaranteed Native children to have the same amount of time set aside for education as the other Canadian children had.[33]

---

[29] Knockwood 1992: 50.

[30] *The Casket*, 28 August 1941.

[31] Duncon C. Scott, Deputy Superintendent General of The Department of Indian Affairs, tells "their 'object and desire' in establishing the new school was that its graduates should become self-supporting and 'not return to their old environment and habits'." *New Maritimes*, March/April 1992, p. 9.

[32] Joe 1996: 52.

[33] *Atlantic Insight*, February 1988, p. 23.

Knockwood was first not negative to school, but the hope of a good education was later on dashed to the ground. The bright spot in life for her and her brothers and sisters was that they knew that their parents would come and visit them every Sunday. The hardest time was had by those children with parents who had no possibilities to visit them, and since the headmaster was very restrictive about giving school permits, the isolation from their relatives became painful. One pupil, Peter Julian, says he is still tormented by his memories of being deserted in a strange and frightful world, without being able to have contact with his family. His mother, who lived on Cape Breton, visited him just once during all his nine years in school.[34]

It is, however, not all children who remember the time at school as dark years. For many the education gave them the platform to enter Canadian society that their parents had hoped for. Mildred Cremo, who stayed at Shubenacadie from 1955-1965, looks back at these years as happy ones. When she was seven her mother became severely sick and her blind stepfather could not take care of the little girl but sent her away. Cremo remembers the poverty and the alcohol addiction in Eskasoni, the reserve where she grew up, and the boarding school became thus for her a place of refuge from starvation and worries. The basic training in school gave her possibilities to continue with a higher education and later on she got a well-paid job in the USA.[35]

However, for most of the Mi'kmaq their education did not lead anywhere. When they did not see any future in modern society, many of them felt deprived of their childhood and lost in a no-man's land, where ties to the former generation had been cut off. The socialization of the young Mi'kmaq for the first time in a more systematic way had been done by the institutions of the colonizer and not by the Mi'kmaq themselves. Unknown to the school were the Kluskap stories. The landscape Kluskap transformed during his beaver hunt, or by his travels in the province, was in school replaced with lessons in geography. When the stories later turned up in reading books, the school had its discourse when it came to Kluskap's tricks in the landscape. By placing the stories among other fairy tales in the books, society had told the Mi'kmaq in what context such texts belonged.

The world was, for Mi'kmaq children, from now on no longer only the former local lifeworld with its well-known places. They had also learnt about other countries, oceans and continents, and the places that they were familiar

[34] *MMNN*, 1992, no 11, p. 9.
[35] *MMNN*, 1992, no 7, p. 10.

with were trapped in squared patterns in an atlas, where the Mi'kmaq names had been replaced by English names. They learned about the forest's plants and animal life not by dwelling in the landscape, but by reading or looking at pictures in biology books. The teachers could not understood that the forest, the place they saw as a counterpart to civilized society, and a world they should save the Mi'kmaq children from, was a place the children in early childhood had felt as their home. Fear for them was the classroom discipline. Although not all children in Shubenacadie were victimized by injustices or heart-rending farewells to their parents, school became a symbol for the colonial oppression and a cultural act of cruelty. It is common today that the Mi'kmaq refer to the residential school as a dark spot in their past, and I was told as an explanation to the alcohol abuse or the violent behavior among some middle-aged men on the reserves: − Shubie, you know.

An ambiguous story

Wallis describes the first part of the 20th century as a period of Mi'kmaq "culture loss". Pan-Indianism spread to the reserves during the 1950s, but Ruth and Wilson Wallis are very careful to predict what this newborn interest for the "Indian" would lead to ultimately for the Mi'kmaq. There are men, they tell us, who join other Native groups in Canada and the USA, and some reserves had sent representatives to the North American Brotherhood in Ottawa. By doing this they hoped that they could put harder pressure on the government to meet their demands. But even if the Mi'kmaq had derived improvements from the main society (the right to vote, a higher material standard like cars etc.), Wallis says that in order to realize their demands they were not prepared to leave the reserves, lose their welfare or tax benefits and above all, not lose their ethnic identity.[36]

Some years after Wilson Wallis returned in the 1950s, Philip Bock went to the reserve Restigouche in 1961 to do fieldwork.[37] His aim was to examine the contemporary culture on the reserve and to point at some important connections or disconnections with the traditional Mi'kmaq culture. Most of his fieldwork confirms Wallis' observations from the 1950s. The change from Mi'kmaq *wigwam* camps to modern houses on the reserves is so radical that a passer-by would not notice he or she is in another culture: "A passing tourist might never realize he had driven through an Indian Reserve if he had missed

[36] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 308, cf. Gross 1971.

[37] His main fieldwork was done in Restigouche, with only some short visits to other reserves in the province.

the small sign reading 'Reserve Indien – vitesse 30,' for the general appearance of the Reserve is that of a pleasant rural residential community."[38]

Bock noticed, as did Wallis, that the old, oral tradition is gone or in the best case exists as "survivals" of the past: "The aboriginal faith is dead; any survivals are better treated as fragments of folklore."[39] Even if the old way of telling stories is gone, Bock writes that a good storyteller is still appreciated. The culture loss seemed to be most obvious among the younger Indians, who conflated folklore fragments with modern stories. A new thing that would radically change the storytelling was the television. Many young ones had watched a television series in the 1960s, *The Adventures of Glooskap*. Now many Mi'kmaq in their thirties admitted that they never had heard of their culture hero before they saw the program (or read the monograph by Wallis & Wallis).[40] One example of the influence of television is clearly seen in how the traditional stone dwarfs, *bugaladamuc*[41], are conflated with the seven dwarfs in Walt Disney's production. Bock sees in this conflation a huge problem for future research in Mi'kmaq traditional stories. How can scholars distinguish modern influences in Mi'kmaq stories from traditional beliefs? But the problem of the "true" Mi'kmaq traditions is actually more a problem for Bock, Wallis and older scholars because of their culture concept. The idea that it was possible to reconstruct a "traditional culture" made many scholars at that time try to distinguish between traditional and European motifs in the stories. But, as earlier mentioned, even the stories from the 19th century were influenced by a long-lasting contact with the Europeans, and they more mirrored the lifeworld of the time they were told in, than they displayed an original, pre-Columbian culture.

Bock writes that the Mi'kmaq lifeworld so radically had changed during the last 60 years that the feeling of continuity had disappeared. When the younger ones looked at Wallis' monograph the reaction was that the content in his book was "all made up". A woman gave a milder comment: "It's like reading about another world".[42] Bock summarizes his fieldwork thus: "The total situation at Restigouche does not seem to be conducive to any sort of *revitalism*, largely because of the 'culture loss' which has affected all Micmac

[38] Bock 1966: 30.
[39] Bock 1966: 55, 85; cf. Wallis & Wallis 1953.
[40] Bock 1966: 85.
[41] Wallis spells it *pugulatamutc*.
[42] Bock 1966: 88.

groups."[43] The older generation idealized the past, but not the younger one. Bock feels melancholic that the Mi'kmaq soon would be assimilated into main society. There are values, he says, that are typically Mi'kmaq, and it is desirable they might remain: "kindness, hospitality and a special dignity".[44]

Bock did fieldwork in the middle of the Mi'kmaq modernization process. There are ambiguities in his material predicting a Mi'kmaq future, which modern scholars today, with the key in their hands, could interpret differently than the pessimistic and resigned Bock, who thought traditional culture would be buried for ever. The Mi'kmaq themselves were aware of the new orientation Bock mentions in his monograph. One problem in the changing process was for them not the loss of the external distinctive features (the houses, clothes etc.), but the work with their identity. "Can you tell me where the Indians came from?", was a question they often asked Bock. Among the younger Mi'kmaq, who worried about the future and in some cases used drugs, this question carried a much deeper meaning than asking for a place or archeological data. According to Bock, the hidden message was instead: "Can you tell me who I am?"[45] But reflections on identity did not end up in total resignation for the Mi'kmaq. It created possibilities among them to actively participate in the construction of a positive self image, instead of adopting the more racist pictures they were given by Whites. There were also "Indian" images in the main society that the Mi'kmaq could use in a creative way. A son of one of Bock's informants, who had learned to make snow shoes and baskets, dressed up willingly in a syncretistic "Indian dress" to amuse tourists at a holiday camp in New York State and could in this way earn some extra money.[46]

The school and the ecclesiastical year influenced the activities on the reserve during the 1960s, and teachers and priests were important authorities in the society. But the school and the church did not totally control the group. There are data in Bock's work that are important to notice in order to understand the coming ethnic revival during the 1970s. There were Mi'kmaq who were critical to the Canadian school system. Their attitude was that "too much learning" might be dangerous. An explanation to some young men's problems on the reserve was that they had been reading too much.[47] The discontentment

[43] Bock 1966: 87.
[44] Bock 1966: 88.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Bock 1966: 42.
[47] Bock 1966: 39.

with school became evident when most Mi'kmaq children chose to quit school when they were 16 years old. The reasons why they did not continue at high school varied from case to case, but some patterns were obvious. They did not like the authoritarian structure, they did not see any connection between their daily life and the school, and they could not understand how school could give them a brighter future. In spite of their education they still got no jobs.

It was not only in the education system that the authorities felt resistance from the Mi'kmaq. Although most of the Mi'kmaq said they were Catholics and joined in the church activities, two priests told Bock they had their doubts about "the depth of religiosity of the Indians".[48] The Mi'kmaq's own explanation to this was that they made a clear difference between the church and the priests. They thought the priests were too authoritative and only interested in getting money. Bock noticed how the Mi'kmaq instead had chosen to emphasize their special Catholicism when members in a Biblical group spoke about "the history of the Micmac on birchbark."[49]

Another interesting description of the Mi'kmaq lifeworld in the 1960s is found in an article by James Howard. He went to Chapel Island in 1962 to visit St. Anne's Festival, the most important celebration for the Catholic Mi'kmaq. The festival is held on many reserves, but Chapel Island holds a special position, since it is the place where Grand Chief, Grand Captain and Grand Council attend. Howard was interested in studying what different parts in the celebration that originated from European Catholicism and what parts were "old Indian", and furthermore what features could be defined as syncretistic. During one of his days on the island he was invited to some families who seemed to have an interest in the newly growing pan-Indianism. The families encouraged other Mi'kmaq to use their traditional dress, songs and dances. They sang songs, beat on a hand drum and wanted to learn more about the songs Howard knew from the Omaha, Ponca and Dakota. These families dressed up during the festival in modern Ojibwa clothes "with a strong Plains or Pan-Indian influence apparent in the warbonnets, bustles, and geometrically-designed beadwork."[50] This happy gathering was however disturbed during the evening by a Catholic priest. He abruptly informed them that pagan music was not suitable at a religious festival that was intended to

[48] Bock 1966: 55.
[49] Bock 1966: 87.
[50] Howard 1965: 10.

celebrate Saint Anne.[51] But not all Catholic priests were skeptical towards the pan-Indian features. During the procession day a St. Anne's Day *powwow* was held, with drums, songs and dances "and finally a young Catholic priest (but not our fiery-eyed friend) joined in, his cassock flapping."[52]

To view the invisible

The changes in Mi'kmaq culture were very obvious for Wilson Wallis and for Bock. They are, however, aware that other culture traits than the visible ones persisted. Bock gives some examples of Mi'kmaq characteristics that still in the 1960s distinguished the group from the rest of society. The Mi'kmaq were restricted by other law regulations, spoke another language than the English and differed both socially and culturally from the Canadians.

Bock's report from Restigouche shows similarities with another fieldwork from the 1960s by Fred Gross. Gross does not tell us the name of the reserve, only "Indian Island".[53] He states that the changes the Mi'kmaq have gone through during years of European influences, have brought the tribe so far from their traditional lifeworld that a return to their former lifeworld would feel just as alienated as for the Canadians if they today should return to their ancestors' way of living. Furthermore it would be impossible to return to the traditional life, since the basic conditions for the ecosystem that is needed for a hunting and gathering society are gone. Gross wants, as did Bock, to emphasize the difference between what the observer could see and not see in what it is to be a Mi'kmaq:

> Thus there are few clues by which a casual observer might identify these people as being culturally distinctive. A more thorough examination, however, yields a number of behavioral patterns which are distinctive of this and other Reserve Micmac populations. In part, these are modifications of earlier Micmac traditions; in part, they are responses to the special legal status of Indians, as determined by the Act and its implementation.[54]

[51] Howard 1965: 7.
[52] Howard 1965: 10.
[53] Gross 1971: 89.
[54] Gross 1971: 91.

The invisible patterns in a culture are something Harold McGee (1974) emphasizes in his thesis on Mi'kmaq ethnicity. He agrees with Wallis and Bock, that many of the visible symbols in the former Mi'kmaq traditional culture were lost in the modernization process. This is the process Wallis labels as a "culture loss". But, McGee says, Wallis conflates a culture loss with the loss of some visible symbols. What is lost are only the things that more obviously marked an ethnic characteristic. Other features remained, e.g. language, belief in supernatural beings,[55] a special form of Mi'kmaq Catholicism and some customs like the auction of the belongings of a dead person after the funeral. McGee says that the "spirit" of a culture lies in its possibilities to give a special outlook on the world and react to it with this outlook. With this view Mi'kmaq society still is different from Canadian society.[56] The Mi'kmaq have had their interpretations and reactions on the processes they have partaken in. They wanted, during the 1950s, to increase their material standard, keep the allowances from main society, but not lose their ethnic identity and *not* leave the reserves.[57] During the 19th century the government had a hard time to get the Mi'kmaq settled. A hundred years later there was a strong resistance among them against moving, e.g. to the places where jobs were available. Gross noticed in the 1960s how deeply the Mi'kmaq had been rooted on the reserves, which now had become places they looked upon as their home: "For these the Reserve serves as more than a home; it serves as a refuge within which they are protected by the various welfare and other services which the Branch − they believe − is committed to provide indefinitely."[58]

Many events in the main society in the 1960s and the 1970s would leave traces on the reserves were met with new strategies from the Natives. Different protest movements were growing during this time; US Civil Rights, Black Power and the Peace Movement, to mention a few of them. An important organization and prototype for North American Natives became the American Indian Movement, AIM.

---

[55] McGee (1974: 123) asked two informants in 1970 about supernatural beings and noticed that their answers differed from the White society. Most of the beings, they said, were not active, but they mentioned Kluskap as a potential power to count on if they should be threatened.

[56] McGee writes (1974: 128) "the genius of a culture lies in its ability to provide distinctive ways of viewing the world and reacting to it in terms of this distinctive perspective. The Micmac are still culturally distinct in these terms."

[57] McGee 1974: 102, cf. Wallis & Wallis 1955: 308.

[58] Gross 1971: 93.

AIM – to be an Indian

AIM − American Indian Movement − was initiated in 1962 in Minnesota Stillwater State Prison. Two Natives, Clyde Bellecourt and Eddie Benton Banai, wanted to react against the bad treatment they had experienced in federal prisons. Injustice in trials and a negative self-image had put them and many of their "brothers" in a world of crimes and drugs. Two men, Dennis Banks and Russell Means, would later join the movement and hold leading positions in the further work.

AIM, formally constituted in 1968, wanted to revive the "Indian". The construction of a positive self-image, especially among the younger generation, was highly purposeful identity building. Many of the members had left their reserves a long time ago and become "urban Indians". Some of them in early childhood had gone through hard separations from their families, when they were put in residential schools. Their lifeworlds radically differed from the more locally embedded young people's lives on the reserves.[59] The search for roots made many of the AIM-members go back to the reserves. There they became a front in the "Indian" revitalization process. They often partook in occupations in order to spread their message in the media and thereby to the general public. An important incident was the occupation of Alcatraz from November 1969 to July 1971.[60] Another important role AIM came to play took place on the Lakota reserve Pine Ridge. A corrupt leader, Richard "Dick" Wilson, ruled the reserve since 1972. He had put a large amount of the federal welfare money in his own pocket or given it away to relatives and friends instead of paying it out to the needy. When AIM tried to return the money to the righteous owners, Wilson started a battle against them and armed himself with his "goon squad", (Guardians of the Oglala Nation). The traditionalists on the reserve then joined in a counter organization, OSCRO (Oglala Sioux Civil Rights Organisation). They fought, together with AIM, a positional war against the Wilson "army". The culmination was a 71 day occupation of Wounded Knee, a place with deep symbolic significance in Sioux history. The occupants were surrounded with marshals, federal policemen, the FBI and Wilson's army. The event was spread quickly by American and European papers. For Lakota Natives, and other people who joined their battle, this occupation gained a great symbolic meaning: "It was Wounded

[59] Matthiessen 1980/1991.

[60] Matthiessen 1980/1991: 37pp.

Knee and the seventh Cavalry all over again".[61] Although the occupants had to give up, they won a symbolic victory that echoed all over the North American continent. The Lakota Native became a prototype for the traditional Indian and his heroic fight. Beatrice Medicine, a Lakota woman and anthropologist, tells that many of the Mi'kmaq she taught in New Brunswick 1976 did not feel like Indians as long as they not had gone to South Dakota to participate in the Lakota sun dance.[62]

The "Indian" becomes a Mi'kmaq

Ten years after Bock's stay in Restigouche a lot of changes had occurred on the reserves. Tord Larsen's fieldwork in Nova Scotia 1972-1974 gives a totally different picture of the Mi'kmaq traditions. Larsen observes on the reserves a vivid, cultural creativity, which he names "Indian nationalism", "cultural renaissance" or "ethnic incorporation".[63] If there were few advantages for different Native groups in the USA or Canada in the 1930s to mark their distinctiveness, there now had arisen benefits in being an ethnic group. The Canadian Natives in the 1970s for the first time got a more positive response to their problems. The reasons for these reactions are many. An important change took place in 1971, when the UN changed its policies regarding indigenous people's possibilities to raise their voices in a larger forum. The issues concerning indigenous groups were no longer internal matters for the specific country, but could be discussed on the international arena.[64] The World Council of Indigenous Peoples was founded in the 1970s, and became the first of the NGOs (Non-Governmental International Organizations). Later on it got consultative status in the UN (1987).[65] Another important group was established in 1977, the IPN (Indigenous People's Network). White academics and authors also became members of this group.

---

[61] Matthiessen 1980/1991: 67; cf. Kurkiala 1995: 152pp., and Nabakov 1978/1991: 372pp.

[62] Kurkiala 1997: 170. Some Mi'kmaq Warriors in 1988 took help from a Lakota medicine man and performed a sun dance in Eskasoni on Cape Breton Island. Many sun dances were held the following summer, which made one leader among the traditionalists to react to these new traditions for the Mi'kmaq. He first stresses the importance of passing on Mi'kmaq tradition to the younger generation, but then says: "The Sun dance, piercing of the skin, use of marihuana, eating dogs or to use peyote are not the ancient ways of our Micmac people, and we cannot use these rituals in our native spiritual traditions." (*MN*, 17 November 1988: 16, quoted from Prins 1994: 383.)

[63] Larsen 1983: 37.

[64] Wilmer 1993: 187.

[65] Wilmer 1993: 3.

The different Native leaders learned a new tactic in the 1970s when they confronted main society. With protests, confrontations, lobbying and by using the media they made their voices heard and their views were often met with sympathy. Some of the groups were militant, some used civil disobedience or in other ways threatened law and order. Furthermore, Natives now engaged well-educated lawyers, who could deal with the main society's regulations concerning Native laws and rights.[66] Many important victories were won all over the North American continent. As an example, a few Native leaders managed in 1975, by referring to the constitutional rights of their people, to prevent Hydro-Quebec from building a gigantic million dollar project in North Quebec. The unexpected reaction from Canadian Natives concerning the 1969 White Paper gave as a result more power to strong Native leaders.[67] In the case of the Mi'kmaq, this was the contributory reason to the formation of UNSI (the Union of Nova Scotia Indians) in 1969. The organization was an offshoot to the early pan-Indian movement and the leaders in the local bands were represented. Their politics demanded a better treatment of the Natives and stressed the positive in being a Mi'kmaq.[68] It was not opportunistic for a politician to say no to ethnic groups' demands, when the risk was in the "best" cases to be accused of being a conservative or a capitalist, in the worse cases to be labeled as a racist. The militant, ethnic groups in North America now had become pressure groups with a noble face.[69]

When Larsen arrived to the Mi'kmaq reserves in the 1970s he was not struck by what Wallis and Bock described as "culture loss", but by the many ways the group used to express a Mi'kmaq identity. The growing ethnification among North American Natives had thus also reached the Mi'kmaq. Being a Mi'kmaq was, of course, unimportant in some contexts, like driving a car on the highway. What Larsen examined was the contexts and occasions that meant a lot for the Mi'kmaq when they depicted themselves as a group: "These situations, occasions and arenas are taken out of the flow of ongoing interaction and given a special status, sanctified as emblematic of the group and celebrated as symbols ...".[70] He noticed it was not arbitrary what symbols they chose when identity was negotiated. There was a reservoir of potential candidates, and a technique to transform these into specific successful cases

[66] Tanner 1983: 22pp.
[67] The White Paper wanted to dissolve the status of being an Indian and turn all citizens into Canadians.
[68] Gonzales 1981, McGee 1974.
[69] Roosens 1989/1991: 14.
[70] Larsen 1983: 111.

of ethnic marking. The Mi'kmaq added new meaning to facts, developed a jurisdiction and moral for raising new demands on Canadian society and recontextualized familiar things. To live on welfare was redefined from being a federal "handout" to a shameful payment for the land stolen from the Indians.[71] Mi'kmaq actions must thus be put in a larger Canadian context if the mechanisms were to be fully understandable. Larsen wants to revise the image of the Indian as either a passive victim of colonization or as a passive vessel of an unchangeable, aboriginal culture. The reserves are islands, surrounded by a powerful society, and to fully understand how the Mi'kmaq act, their actions must be seen as generated from a minority group which always has to work in a dialogue with a hegemonic society.

Nomadism, to hunt, live in *wigwams*, wear traditional clothes and consult the *buoin* have disappeared as ethnic markers for the Mi'kmaq. But Larsen gives other examples of what the Mi'kmaq in the 1970s count as their heritage: the Mi'kmaq language, some traditional legends, the *waltes*-game, dances, St. Anne's Day, some customs and their pictorial writing. Some of these examples are pre-European while others are Catholic, although deeply integrated in the Mi'kmaq culture. When St. Anne's Day becomes important for the traditionalistic Mi'kmaq in the 1970s, it is foremost not as a day when the believers should be joined with their patron saint, but as a way to show ethnic belonging and a demand for a Mi'kmaq nation. The Mi'kmaq are, of course, aware of the Christian background to St. Anne's festival, but the celebration has become such a great event for the tribal community that they do not think the Catholic features disturb the message of being a Mi'kmaq. When some Mi'kmaq noticed how other tribes tried to eliminate European influences in their traditions, their reaction was that this is unnecessary. The reaction was instead that the Mi'kmaq religion is Catholicism, but with a strong dosage of aboriginal religion.

Larsen mentions other examples than St. Anne's Day as successful occasions of ethnic incorporation. One example was when the Union of Nova Scotia Indians invited all who had any skills in Mi'kmaq tradition to a conference. The participants showed different handicrafts, told stories, and displayed traditional dances in the evening, accompanied by drums and chanting. *Waltes* was played, two and two, followed by cheering from the audience. The dice game was originally combined with religious activities. Mi'kmaq men might know if they were going to win or lose in a battle. Now the game

[71] Larsen 1983: 44.

was played in another context. Products, made during the handicraft day, became more of souvenirs than common articles in a hunter/gatherer society. The most important thing was not to put the objects or the *Waltes*-game in their historical context, but to disembed parts of Mi'kmaq tradition and put them into a new context in which they gained a political message. To participate in the conference, and only watch the dice game and perceive articles as interesting information of a past culture, is thus to miss the point of the information. The meta-text was obvious: "We are Indians and you are not and that is an important distinction."[72] The conference was video-filmed to be used in two ways: as a manual for the Mi'kmaq about their past culture and as information to the main society about Mi'kmaq culture. The video message was that the Mi'kmaq is a Native group that still keeps its traditions. This cultural activity seems different than that Bock and Wallis described in the 1950s and the 1960s. Now the Mi'kmaq identity was a way of being different from society instead of assimilating to it. A traditional Mi'kmaq wake could now also add a political message. It became a visible trait of a culture that was both different from and superior to the White society. The way a wake was performed could be used rhetorically as an example of how the Mi'kmaq community shares sorrow. The Mi'kmaq did not, as the Whites do, make grief into a private matter and mourn in solitude.

It is from this point the Mi'kmaq's articulations of their tradition and history should be analyzed. When a Mi'kmaq says "We lived a better life before the Whites came" the answer can be yes or no. The point is that this statement does not mainly concern historical conditions, but more of rights and obligations and as such it is negotiable. If accepted, it demands something from main society: White people today owe something they have taken from the Indians. The dichotomy between Whites and Natives is important, because their positions differ: one is carrying guilt and the other one is the creditor. A successful incorporation takes place, according to Larsen, when a situation is disembedded from its context and given a special status. Something is made holy as an emblem for the group and works as a symbol for "what we are" more than just parents, husbands and wives and workers.

The ethnic awakening during the 1970s would be of great importance in the 1990s' conflicts between the Mi'kmaq and the authorities about the rights to Kelly's Mountain. The Mi'kmaq needed a leader or a symbol in building their identity that successfully could bring Mi'kmaq Catholics and the new

[72] Larsen 1983: 116.

traditionalists together and display to the world their distinctiveness in Canadian society. This would also imply that the Mi'kmaq could raise political demands concerning their rights in Canadian society. Kluskap became the symbol that united the Mi'kmaq.

To glimpse the shadow of Kluskap

During the time the Mi'kmaq were modernized, the stories about Kluskap were not in focus. They had filled an important function in the 19th century, but in the 1950s they were mostly about a world that the modern Mi'kmaq no longer lived in. It was hard to find a role for the hero in the modern society, since Kluskap was distant from a farmer's life, or that of the worker in the new factories. Wilson Wallis tells us how his informants in 1911-1912 agreed that Kluskap's home was behind the clouds, but in 1953 his home had changed to a cave on Cape Breton. But most Mi'kmaq did not spend much of their time in the 1950s talking of Kluskap or his second coming: "Gluskap legends may be unchanged but few know them and we heard them only from people over sixty who no longer dominate the social scene."[73] Bock was even more pessimistic than Wallis about the future Mi'kmaq stories of Kluskap. When he did fieldwork in Restigouche in 1961 many Mi'kmaq in their thirties admitted that they never had heard about Kluskap. Gross reports from the 1960s that: "Although most are familiar with Glooskap, the central figure in Micmac oral tradition, few can retell any of the numerous legends that have been recorded."[74]

A more optimistic view than the one that tells us about Kluskap as a forgotten hero is found in a short passage by James Howard, when he describes how the Mi'kmaq celebrated St. Anne's Day in 1962. He strolls around Chapel Island and stays at one of the fires:

> At one fire where I stopped to chat, an old man recounted some of the legendary exploits of *Gluskap* the Micmac culture hero. At another a Micmac girl, a schoolteacher home on a holiday, very Caucasoid in appearance but Micmac to the core, told a story in which a Micmac tricked a White man into eating his own excrement. She

[73] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 306.
[74] Gross 1971: 90.

> ended her tale with the remark 'That proves Indians are smarter than Whites!'[75]

It is possible that this Mi'kmaq woman, since she was a schoolteacher, knew the Mi'kmaq stories from her reading books. But it is not likely that in a children's book you could read about a White man who was enticed to eat Indian excrement. She might have read Wallis' monograph, since the story is found there[76], but it is also possible that she had heard it from a Mi'kmaq. More of interest is Howard's note that an Elder told a Kluskap story. Maybe the stories had not disappeared. Cape Breton is a stronghold of conservative Mi'kmaq compared with the mainland reserves, and neither Bock nor Wallis did their fieldwork on the island. McGee also mentions Kluskap in his work on Mi'kmaq ethnicity. He writes that Kluskap still at the beginning of the 1970s had a special status compared to other supernatural beings in the Mi'kmaq tradition: "While most of the supernatural beings mentioned in the folktales of the Micmac are considered to be inactive, Glooscap, the culture hero, is potentially active for someday he will return ... 'when the Indians really need him'."[77] Larsen does not mention Kluskap as a potential candidate to the powerful symbols the Mi'kmaq used in the 1970s as signs for their ethnic identity. But other sources show how the interest in Kluskap grew among the neo-traditionalists[78] in the 1970s. The culture hero and the trickster is here depicted as an Indian Christ. Noel Knockwood, one of the leaders in the growing neotraditionalism, referred to Kluskap as an Indian Messiah and said: "the Great Spirit (God) sent his son Glooscap to his people, the Indians".[79] Others wanted to send their prayers to Kluskap and not to the Catholic Saint Anne: "to worship her and to not worship Glooscap is undermining our own culture and identity".[80]

Kluskap eludes us in ethnographic descriptions of Mi'kmaq everyday life from 1950-1970. The reader sometimes catches a glimpse of his presence,

---

[75] Howard 1965: 8.
[76] Wallis & Wallis 1955: 469pp.
[77] McGee 1974: 123.
[78] The Mi'kmaq's special relation to Catholicism has had as a result that two groups are partly competing to call themselves traditionalists. One of them is Catholic traditionalists who say Catholicism is a part of Mi'kmaq tradition. Another group wants to mark a distance to Christianity and stresses the pre-Columbian Mi'kmaq traditions. Parkhill (1997: 135) chooses in his work to call the latter neotraditionalists, to distinguish them from the Catholic traditionalists.
[79] *MN*, 5 November 1976: 16, quoted from Prins 1994: 388.
[80] *MN*, 5 September 1976: 2, quoted from Prins 1994: 387.

like a quickly passing shadow. As I have mentioned above there has been, since the end of the 19th century, an interest in the main society for Kluskap stories. White authors have created their own versions of them that ran parallel to the Mi'kmaq stories of their culture hero. In the 1960s a new interest arose for the Mi'kmaq culture hero, and authors began to rewrite older texts. This new literature about Kluskap spread very quickly with the help of modern media like television, or via books and theater plays. Since the Mi'kmaq now were able to read and had televisions, old stories came back to them in a new form. Instead of looking at the shadow of Kluskap, this character walked right into the spotlights.

Kluskap arrives Eskasoni by car

Although the Mi'kmaq spoke English in the 1960s and were interested in modern Canadian society, their lifeworld was still the reserve. They spent most of their time with relatives and friends and had few contacts with White society. But a radical change would now open the door to a greater world for the Mi'kmaq: the television.

Hollywood had produced a lot of Western movies, but they had a hard time to find a public on the reserves. One reason could be that the cinemas were located in the towns. Television made it much easier to watch a movie. Another reason that the early movies did not attract the Mi'kmaq could be that the "Indians" were not depicted in a flattering way. There were, in the movies as well as in the books, elements of racism both explicit as well as hidden.[81] I first felt embarrassed when I once watched an old John Wayne movie together with a Mi'kmaq friend. "Wild" Indians were howling around on horses and without hesitating killed defenseless women and children. In spite of this rather unflattering picture of the "Indians", my Mi'kmaq friend said with a good sense of humor: "That's us!"

The green movement and other radical organizations were strongly critical to the racism and created new images of the "Indian". An early and very popular television series about Kluskap was produced in the 1960s by the Halifax Canadian Corporation. An author, Kay Hill, was asked to rewrite some Kluskap stories so children could enjoy them. The series became so

[81] A very popular writer of Indian books was the German Karl May, who never set his foot in America. By the turn of the century a lot of literature about the Canadian Mounted Police and "Indians" was written in Canada. The content of the books is how the White man civilized the wilderness and with only a few exceptions the "Indian" is synonymous with the wild. He is bloodthirsty and a constant enemy to culture (read White society) (Francis 1992: 74).

popular that Hill wrote three books from her synopsis: *Glooscap and His Magic* (1963), *Badger the Mischief Maker* (1965) and *More Glooscap Stories* (1970).[82] Another Kluskap program was created by Daniel and Diane Bertolino for a more adult audience and was finished in 1982 to be a part in their series about *Indian Legends of Canada*.[83] Further movies that were produced were *Glooscap Country* (1962), directed by Margaret Perry[84] for the Nova Scotia Information Service, and *Glooscap*, directed by Harry Pierpoint (1971) to be a part of the American Folklore Series.[85] The programs became very popular and were surely watched with great interest in those Mi'kmaq homes that had a television. These programs gave a positive picture of the culture hero, and evidently made the Mi'kmaq proud over their traditions.

A theater production with Kluskap legends, staged for children, received a great deal of attention at the beginning of the 1970s. The play was written and directed by Evelyn Garbary at the Mermaid Theatre in Windsor, Nova Scotia.[86] Garbary had emigrated from Ireland and was close friend of William Yeats. Inspired by this poet, and his Romantic and Celtic motifs, she got the idea to display what she saw as the ancient history of Nova Scotia, the Mi'kmaq legends. She was astonished to see how unfamiliar Mi'kmaq children were with their own cultural heritage, and decided to take the play and the actors on a tour to the reserves. Sten Eirik, one of the actors, remembers how the ensemble one summer evening in 1975 came to the reserve Eskasoni on Cape Breton. He also remembers how several of the actors had felt a bit embarrassed that it was White actors, that came to act out the Mi'kmaq stories on the reserves. The problem of playing another culture's cultural heritage had therefore been discussed beforehand within the group of actors.

An older Mi'kmaq met them on the reserve. He told them that there were several young Mi'kmaq who wanted to do "research" about their ancient culture. The play started and lasted about an hour. It had more serious adaptations of Kluskap legends and burlesque, funny stories about the animals in the forest, for example the loon. It was a success among the younger Mi'kmaq. Sten Eirik and the other actors were not prepared for such enthusiasm and thirst for the stories. They sat for hours after the performance and discussed with the young audience. Two attitudes, however, dominated among the older

---

[82] Parkhill 1997: 25.

[83] Parkhill 1997: 28.

[84] http://www.nfb.ca/FMT/E/MSN/10/10895.html

[85] These two movies were reviewed by A. Morrison in *American Anthropologist* 1976, vol. 78, no. 4.

[86] Personal communication from Sten Eirik (1998), who was one of the actors in the play.

Mi'kmaq. Some disapproved that the actors had come: What were White men doing on a reserve − portraying Mi'kmaq stories for Mi'kmaq! The other opinion was that the Kluskap stories were like fairy tales, children's stories, not to be taken seriously. But the young audience saw fantastic visions in the stories. They wanted to apply for money towards a theater group of their own.[87] Sten Eirik says that the Mi'kmaq nationalism had been growing stronger at the end of 1960s and the beginning of 1970s and that the play emerged at the right moment in this Mi'kmaq revitalization. He ends our conversation with an excuse: "It was really not us who should bring this tradition further."

The ethnicity among different Native groups grew even stronger during the 1980s. Many Natives began to engage themselves in environmental issues and worked together with various green movements in important cases. Mi'kmaq representatives, together with some environmental activists, visited Sweden twice during the 1980s to protest against the environmental politics of the Swedish company Stora Kopparberg[88] in Nova Scotia. Some Mi'kmaq also participated in the Oka-battle and helped the Mohawks in their struggle to prevent a golf course being built on their ancient burial place. But a strong wind had started to blow even in Mi'kmaq territory. Grand Chief Donald Marshall contacted in 1989 one member of the newly organized *Mi'kmaq Warriors* and asked him to check the truth in a circulating rumor. He had heard that an enormous quarry was planned on Kelly's Mountain. This mountain was by many Mi'kmaq known as Kluskap's Mountain, and according to an old story from Cape Breton, the home of Kluskap.

Epilogue

The twentieth century was a time when the Mi'kmaq local lifeworld opened up and the memories from their lives as hunters slowly faded away. Since nearly all Mi'kmaq now were brought up on the reserves, those places felt like home. The oral stories now had to compete with a new, powerful context: the Canadian school system. The Western products would make the Mi'kmaq look more at what the modern society might offer them, than they would long for their traditional life. But differing from the Canadians, the Mi'kmaq had very scanty access to the services and products in White society. They no

[87] Later on two Mi'kmaq joined the actors and even got roles in the play.

[88] Stora Kopparberg ran, in the 1960s, a pulp mill factory in Port Hawkesbury on Cape Breton.

longer had any pelts to trade with, only their working capacity, and this was not in great demand. Money was distributed to the families in such small amounts that it hardly was enough for life necessities. When the Mi'kmaq interest in Canadian society grew, and their life as hunters was replaced with being marginalized unemployed in the main society's left-over places, their demand to exist as equal citizens in Canadian society increased.

The assimilation politics with residential schools had tried to socialize the children into a more abstract community than the local and kinship-based reserve world. A centralization program was another reason that the local lifeworlds opened up. Half of all Mi'kmaq were moved into two reserves, either Eskasoni or Shubenacadie. The project was a great failure, but it affected the relations on the small reserves.[89] The modernization also affected the Kluskap stories. With the ability to read, the Mi'kmaq got access to the written Kluskap texts that were created by White authors. When the traditionalists in the 1990s referred to the Kluskap tradition they know the newly produced texts in the main society, scholars' works, romanticized Indian literature, television series and movies. If the Kluskap stories are to attract a larger audience, such as other Native groups, Canadians, or an international audience, they must transcend their local contexts. For the Romanticists Kluskap was a wise Indian. Powerless Mi'kmaq made the culture hero more of an Indian Messiah of the oppressed, and modern traditionalists can talk about him as Mother Earth's armor-bearer. When the traditionalists today tell us modern Kluskap stories they may blend the Mi'kmaq tradition with texts, produced by Whites. But it is important to stress that this conflation is more of interest for the scholars than for the Mi'kmaq. It would also be to miss the point to look at the modern stories as merely entertaining texts. The modern Kluskap stories also stem from a lifeworld, and the people who tell them have something important they want to say about this world. These stories deserve to be treated as more than fictional texts, since they are the voices of a real world, the Mi'kmaq's lifeworld. In the 1990s the Kluskap stories played a major role in the political struggle of the right to Kelly's Mountain and the formulations of a Mi'kmaq identity.

[89] York 1989: 62, Wallis & Wallis 1955: 16.

V. THE RETURN OF KLUSKAP (1970-the 1990s)

This is Mi'kmaq land

In the summer of 1984, I visited an Indian reserve for the first time in my life. My husband and I visited Band Chief Ryan Googoo in Whycocomagh to conduct an interview on environmental issues. The year before, Googoo, together with some Green activists, had sued the Stora pulp mill company[1] for spraying the forest with herbicides on Cape Breton in Nova Scotia. They lost the case, but their struggle received attention in Sweden and a Swedish group, the "Support Committee for Nova Scotia", invited Googoo and two of the Green activists to visit Sweden to convey their protests to the Swedish parent company.

The highway to Whycocomagh followed the shore of Bras d'Or Lake and on the other side were towering hills covered with maple, spruce, balsam fir and hardwood. A sign suddenly told visitors that they were now entering a Mi'kmaq reserve. Many of the houses were situated along the road and did not differ from Canadian houses; maybe there were more shacks than in the White neighborhood. A gift shop with a mini-*wigwam*, strategically placed to attract tourists to stop and buy some souvenirs, was the only building that said anything about the "difference". Some men in jeans, caps and T-shirts sat and talked outside the Band Office. They looked curiously at the strangers who parked their car in front of the house.

Ryan Googoo turned out to be a friendly man in early middle age, who patiently answered our questions. To be honest, I do not actually remember much of our talk. What I remember most of all is that something in my expectations was not fulfilled. Everything I saw was so *ordinary* − the houses, the people and the clothes. Now, twenty years later, after many visits to the reserves and longer stays in the province, I view things differently. The one I had expected to meet − the "Indian"− I did not find even in the heart of the reserve, the Band Office. However, there was a group that without hesitating

[1] Stora was at this time an affiliated company of Stora Kopparberg. In 1982, Nova Scotia's environmental department gave Nova Scotia Forest Industries a permit to spray the forests with phenoxy herbicides, forbidden in Sweden. The dioxins in phenoxy herbicides are suspected of causing cancer (*Samefolket*, 1983, no. 12, p. 10).

would have defined themselves as Mi'kmaq, if I had only asked or looked for other things than external characteristics. To be a Mi'kmaq is to say something both about who you are and who you are *not*. It is a feeling of belonging to the group you share your history with, and at the same time a way of keeping your distance from the hegemonic society. If it is hard for the Mi'kmaq to get jobs, the great amount of available time has helped to consolidate them as a group. Most Mi'kmaq live on welfare grants and spend their days with their families, visiting friends and relatives or going hunting and fishing to make their money last longer.

Being a Mi'kmaq can also be expressed in different ways *within* the group. I have participated in sweat ceremonies with neo-traditionalists, visited several *powwows* and joined in the greatest Mi'kmaq tradition of them all, the celebration of the feast day of St. Anne at the end of July on the island of Potloteg (on the Chapel Island reserve). The different ways of being a Mi'kmaq are not bound to competing groups but may be found *within an individual*. Outsiders who want to see an "Indian" sometimes have difficulty in coping with what they see as inconsistency in Mi'kmaq identity. But the manifoldness of Mi'kmaq identity has also been a problem within the group. Who is going to be a spokesman for the community and who is going to define what is meant by being a Mi'kmaq?

A model of manifold dimensions

My study of the Kluskap character and of Mi'kmaq environmental activism in modern times brought me into another context than when I worked on the historical material. As a historian of religions, I analyzed the texts, the authors' ambitions and the spirit of the time. By this method, I sought to reconstruct the world of the Mi'kmaq hunter. In the field, I am part of dynamic and lived worlds. I shall therefore sort out four different levels or dimensions that in various ways have had an effect on my access to and interpretation of the modern Mi'kmaq lifeworld:

1. At level one, we find the *image* of the "Indian", created by the West, with its roots chiefly in the Romantic era.
2. Level two represents the Mi'kmaq's *actual lifeworld*, their everyday life and habitus on the reserves.
3. Level three has arisen in the dialectic between levels one and two. How do the Mi'kmaq *acquire and respond* to the idealistic image?
4. On this last level, I must reflect on *my own role* in different contexts.

The meeting with Ryan Googoo in 1983 is a good example of how all four levels were actualized. The image of the "Indian" is present and so is Googoo's lifeworld as Band Chief in Whycocomagh. His environmental engagement corresponded well to the images of "being an Indian" and "an ecological guru".[2] Finally, I was there, and my questions made Googoo stop chatting with his friends for a while and reflect on his role in the conflict with the Stora Company. In the following pages, I shall further discuss these four levels.

The image

In the year 1885, eighteen railroad cars arrived at Toronto with 150 cowboys, Mexicans, Indians and different kinds of animals. This heterogeneous group was there to perform the Buffalo Bill Wild West show. One of the participants was the well-known Sioux chief, Sitting Bull. It was not the first time that he had visited Canada. He and some of his tribe members had applied for asylum in the country after the victory at Little Big Horn. On that occasion the group was forced to return to North Dakota. But now Sitting Bull was an appreciated attraction, and many visited the show with great interest. One reporter from *The Globe* wrote that the participants were not trained actors, but men who mostly lived in the way displayed in the show. The same reporter emphasized also the continuity in the Sioux tradition: "The Indians have been so isolated from the outside world ... that they are to-day precisely the same in manner, dress, habits and ways of thinking as they were when first taken from their reserves".[3]

One year later, in the winter of 1886, nine Kwakiutl Indians left British Columbia to exhibit their traditions in Germany. They traveled in the wake of the Buffalo Bill show that had been such a great success in Europe. But the German audience questioned the Kwakiutl show. There was no *tomahawk*, and the *war bonnet* and *tipi* were missing. The organizer was accused of fraud, since the audience was fully convinced that the participants were disguised Chinese or Japanese.[4] The image of the Indian had been implanted in the minds of the Whites by paintings, photographs, romantic Indian literature and the Buffalo Bill show. For many, an Indian was a prairie Indian and authenticity was judged according to this preconceived idea. The above his-

---

[2] Calvin Martin (1978: 157) says that the "Indian" in modern times has been introduced to the American public as "the great high priest of the Ecology cult", (cf. Krech 1999).

[3] Francis 1992: 89.

[4] Francis 1992: 94.

torical example is one of many that show how powerful images work. The Kwakiutl in the 19th century did not have access to the Indian images that were created in Western society. Their way of being "Indians" was the same as dressing up in traditional Kwakiutl clothes. Images can thus have absurd consequences, i.e. if the map is not in accordance with reality, it is the map that counts. In his classical work *Orientalism* (1978), Said examined how the West created the Oriental, who, besides being a construction, also implied a hegemonic relation. The Oriental, pictured as the "Other", was something the West needed, partly to define itself and partly to legitimize the colonization of the East.[5] In a similar way as the Oriental was created, the invention of the "Indian" took form:

> Thus we have placed certain expectations upon Native Americans simply by the image of them that we maintain; and these expectations seem to be always in terms of a contrast with what we admire. There is even a forcing of images when 'Indians' are viewed as admirable in contrast to a disenchanting view of European-American values and ways of life.[6]

The hope that the Indian could redeem the disenchanted Westerner has led many White people to travel to the reserve or to look for Indian tutors. One example of this is to be found in the book by Molly Larkin and Bear Heart, *The Wind is My Mother* (1996). Larkin writes about years of spiritual searching and how she came to a dead end in her life. Full of despair and anxiety, she planned to commit suicide. However, in spite of the surrounding darkness, she found consolation in nature:

> Gradually I noticed that, being out in nature I got a feeling of peace that many years of meditation could not give me. Since American Native religion is based on the relationship between Earth and all living beings, the best solution to find peace and balance in my life was to find a Native teacher, willing to work with a non-Native.[7]

---

[5] Said 1978/1993, pp. 64, 69, 86, 300, and 321.
[6] Gill 1982: 8-9.
[7] Bear Hart & M. Larkin 1996: 7-8 [my translation].

The fact that Molly Larkin nourished a vision of the "Indian" does not dismiss the experience she later went through.[8] She met a powerful *person*, Bear Heart, who became the turning-point of her life. Personal narratives, like that of Molly Larkin, are today globally spread and have become important sources of inspiration for others. During the reading, an image of the wise "Indian" is created, and already existing images are further fortified.[9]

Modern lifeworlds

Prins summarizes, in his study of the Mi'kmaq cultural-survival strategy, how the tribe managed to keep its identity as a group precisely by its flexibility: "Alternating between resistance and accommodation, they have maintained some of the indigenous strands in their cultural web and have added new ones when and where required."[10] At the end of the 1960s, McGee distinguished language and Mi'kmaq Catholicism as important symbols of their ethnic identity.[11] The pan-Indian identity was expressed in the often occurring *pow-wows*, gatherings with drumming, chanting, dances, *pipe ceremonies* and talking circles. The Membertou reserve in Sydney, Cape Breton, invited me to a winter *powwow* in February 1993. The program I got followed a common pattern in these gatherings:

> Thursday, Feb. 11, 1993
> − 6:00 p.m. -Sacred Fire lit by George (Sonny) Laporte. Fire goes continuously for four days.
>
> Friday, Feb. 12, 1993
> − 2:00 p.m. Welcome by Melvin Paul, Grand Council Captain
> − Maupltu Wkwisk Drum Group − Host Drummers
> − Introduction of Pow-Wow Committee
> − Grand Entrance

[8] It is interesting to note that Bear Heart in his epilogue (1996: 263) sends his regards to *both* Natives and Whites: "During the years I have lived on this planet I have been lucky collecting in knowledge from different academic institutions as well as from American Native teaching given to me by individuals from different tribes. A great deal of my knowledge I can also thank professional and non-professional persons not belonging to American indigenous people for" [my translation].

[9] A modern image is that of the "Ecological Indian", a subject which Krech examines in his work *The Ecological Indian* (1999): "A noble image speaking to ecological wisdom and prudent care for the land and its resources ... what I call the Ecological Indian: the Native North American as ecologist and conservationist" (p. 16).

[10] Prins 1996: 216.

[11] McGee 1974: 136.

− Sunset: Retire Flag
Meal (non-traditional)
− Drumming, etc., continues

Saturday, Feb. 13, 1993
− Sunrise Ceremony − 7:00 a.m.
− Sweat Lodge
− Elders Gathering
− Talking Circles
− Youth Circles
− Waltes Games
− Grand Entrance − 2:00 p.m.
− Pow-wow Continues

Sunday, February 14, 1993
− Sunrise Ceremony − 7:00 a.m.
− Sweat Lodge
− Elders Gathering
− Talking Circles
− Youth Circles
− Waltes Games
− Grand Entrance − 2:00 p.m.
− Sunset: − Retire Flag
− Give away and Dance
− Traditional Feast
− Closure[12]

The *powwows* are popular events and give opportunities to meet relatives and friends from all over the province. It is strongly emphasized that these gatherings should be free from drugs and alcohol. This demand tells us something about the problems on the reserves. One of the hardest problems during the 1990s was the wave of suicides that swept through the young generation, especially the boys and young men. Big Cove, a small reserve in New Brunswick, was particularly affected in 1992-93, when seven young men within a short time ended their lives. The reserve therefore arranged a seven-day mourning ceremony to stop the suicidal wave and to avoid further tragedies. Many Mi'kmaq from other reserves partook in this gathering, among others, several members of the Mi'kmaq Warrior Society. The invitation from the

[12] The Apiknajit Esmut Pau Wau Committee 1993.

Big Cove Band Council exemplifies how the healing implied both social and spiritual dimensions:

> 7-DAY MOURNING/ HEALING
>
> Our Community has experienced the pain of the recent loss of seven young people. The week of March 8 to March 15 (inclusive) has been set aside for the people of Big Cove as a period of mourning and healing.
>
> It is very unfortunate that our Micmac people have gone through these seven deaths, but it is only through prayer, hard work and determination that we will pull through. We, as a community, must stand firm and strong and see what we can do to avoid such tragedies.
>
> The Chief and Council is in full support that something must be done to have a community response to these happenings.
>
> The seven days activities will consist of the following:
> continuous drumming for these seven days (24 hrs./day for 7 days)
> feeling/talking circles
> information sessions to the public
> sunrise ceremonies each morning
> AA/Alateen/Alanon Meetings
> spiritual awareness via mission (church) and traditional ways
> youth sessions groups
> support of our native brothers and sisters
> the observance of no Alcohol and Drugs[13]

The revival of traditions is an important part of building up self-esteem and mental strength among the Mi'kmaq, who have to struggle with unemployment, poverty and suspicious treatment from Canadian society. Peter Christmas, of the Micmac Association of Cultural Studies, says that the Battle of Kluskap's Mountain became synonymous with the new interest in old traditions: "Through time, a lot of our traditions, history, self-esteem and identity were suppressed by society ... But a native cultural renaissance of sorts began in the 1970s and is culminating today".[14] The growing interest among Natives

[13] Duplicated paper published by the Big Cove Band Council 1993.
[14] *Chronicle-Herald*, 27 March 1993.

in their own traditions led the *Micmac Maliseet Nations News* in September 1992 to define the concepts of "Native Culture" and "Native Spirituality":

> Native cultures in their traditional nature are authentic and dynamic, fostering distinctive and sophisticated development. A sense of identity, pride and self-esteem are rooted in established spiritual principles.
> Native spiritual life is founded on belief in the fundamental interconnectedness of all natural things, all forms of life with primary importance being attached to Mother Earth. A basic sense of community or group contrasts with the non-Indian culture's individualism and sense of private ownership. No distinction is made between spiritual and secular life. For the Natives, spirituality is a total way of life.[15]

The paper gives a word list of traditional ceremonies among Natives, e.g. fasting, the sweat lodge and the use of four holy plants (sweetgrass, sage, cedarwood and tobacco). The reader is requested to let local Elders show how the different traditions should be practiced, and a Mi'kmaq woman describes how her life as a Catholic in Boston was radically changed when she came into contact with the American Indian Movement*:* "Why are you speaking the white man's language, why are you praying to a white man's God? Go home to your elders and find out what the old ways were, and we did."[16]

In the 1990s, compared with the early pan-Indianism, it had become important to emphasize how different beliefs, holy objects and ceremonies varied within Canadian Native cultures. There was now a strong tendency on the reserves to revitalize the Mi'kmaq culture. The Mi'kmaq (like other Canadian Natives), however, did not want to be defined as one of many ethnic groups in Canada. Instead they emphasized that they were a nation (First Nation), and had claims on the land that had once belonged to them. Modernization during the first part of the 20th century had, for many Mi'kmaq, meant the loss of traditions that in today's ethnic renaissance must be recreated. What traditions to be revived, emphasized or rejected could be part of a negotiation? Would the prestigious Sun Dance from Lakota be performed on Mi'kmaq reserves or should only Mi'kmaq traditions (read pre-Columbian) be chosen and which ones? The use of the sweat lodge was described in early missionary literature

[15] *MMMN*, 1992, no. 9, pp. 30.
[16] *MMMN*, December 1992, no. 12, pp. 24.

from the 17th century, but the texts also tell us about "dog feasts", i.e. feasts where dog-meat was the main dish.[17] Although many of the neo-traditionalists went into sweat lodges, they never had dog feasts. Letters to the newspapers show how some younger Mi'kmaq could feel lost in the new way of being Mi'kmaq:

> I understand that I am part Blood Micmac on my father's side of the family. I am into Pow Wows and Mountain Man here in Utah. I would like to go total Micmac Indian in dress. I know nothing about the Micmac Indian, the customs, dress, beadwork. I cannot find any book on the Micmac in Utah book store. So if you could tell me where to get these books or information, it would be greatly appreciated.[18]

When a group of people consciously innovate or reinterpret traditions, they also reflect on their identity. Bock writes in the 1960s that the Mi'kmaq's feeling of being alienated in the modern world made them ask the question "Who am I?". But in the 1990s the question was rather "How shall I define my self?", combined with the idea that, "if I do not define myself, somebody else will."[19] It has been important among some traditionalists to set themselves not only against White society, but also against the Catholic traditionalists. The split goes even deeper. It happened that tensions arose in the group between the more militant Mi'kmaq Warriors and the "pacifistic" traditionalists, who were more interested in cultural activities than militant manifestations. Since there are different factions within the Mi'kmaq community, the question of who is to be the Mi'kmaq spokesman becomes a complicated matter. The right to speak for the group is not something to take for granted, and thus the leadership must be authorized by a credible person or instance. Along with the right to speak for the group went the question of authenticity. Messages should be delivered by a "true" Mi'kmaq and not by a "wannabee". To be titled a *pipe-carrier* gave the recipient an important position within the

---

[17] Prins (1994: 385) distinguishes three different kinds of neo-traditions: " 'invented traditions' − newly manufactured customs or practices; 'retrieved traditions' − revivals of historical, sometimes long-abandoned customs or practices; and 'adoptive traditions' − selective customs or practices borrowed from foreign groups and inserted in the local cultural envelope as if they were indigenous." Cf. Hobsbawn & Ranger (1983) for a discussion of "invented traditions".

[18] *MN*, 1992 no. 8.

[19] The last quotation is from Kurkiala (1997: 244) and concerns the Lakota, but is also applicable to the Mi'kmaq.

group. A traditionalist complained in the 1990s about the inflation of self-made, spiritual leaders:

> We have a lot of what we call 'plastic medicine people' also. They take treatment, or they sober up, or they go off in a fast four days, and they're coming down with all kinds of stories on what they've seen on their quest ... They're going much too fast ... Now we got so many pipe carriers, anybody who has the desire to whittle out a pipe, by the time it's finished, they're a pipe carrier ...[20]

One way to confirm the authority to speak was to anchor it in a group whose status could not be questioned by different factions. One leader of the traditionalists thus asked the Grand Council to get a written document that legalized his right to lead ceremonies and to speak in public:

> GRAND COUNCIL OF THE MI'KMAQ FIRST NATION
> As Grand Chief of the Mi'kmaq first nation, the Grand Council is the original and true form of Government to the Mi'kmaq people in the seven districts that are known as Mi'kmaq territory. These districts include Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and parts of New Brunswick and Quebec. We the Grand Council have always governed over Mi'kmaq territory for the well being of our Mi'kmaq brothers and sisters and since I Grand Chief (x.x.) am the leader of this great nation I have the power to make any appointments that I may believe to be of service to all or some of the Mi'kmaq population. Having said this I Grand Chief (x.x.) wish to inform those who may question the authority of x.x.[21] Mi'kmaq territory in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia who is a pipe carrier and is now appointed by me to do sweat lodge ceremonies for those who follow the ways of the Mi'kmaq traditionalist and let it be also known that along with the appointment of this honor to do the sacred ceremonies x.x. will be given the protection of my office as Grand Chief of the Mi'kmaq first Nation.
> WELIAK!
> YOURS IN PRIDE AND HONOR[22]

The letter is signed by the Grand Chief and attested by another Mi'kmaq.

---

[20] Alf Hornborg 1994: 255.
[21] Name of a neotraditionalist.
[22] I have chosen to quote this and unpublished texts below verbatim.

The above example shows how the Mi'kmaq lifeworld is far more nuanced than the idealized picture of being a Mi'kmaq. But the romantic image has got a discursive role. When the Kwakiutl, in the 19th century, did not live up to the European audience's expectations of what "real Indians" look like, their show was a failure. When the Mi'kmaq are confronted with the Indian image, they run the risk of being accused by Canadian society of not being authentic. But the modern Mi'kmaq have been given by education and modernization a possibility, which the 19th century Kwakiutl (and the 19th century Mi'kmaq) lacked. They are aware today of the romantic Indian image and may use it, above all, in their confrontations with Canadian society.[23] There is on the reserves today a rift between those who have staged the modern project of self-identity as a traditionalist, *pipe-carrier* or pan-Indianist and those who have embedded themselves in a more local lifeworld. As soon as some Mi'kmaq try to respond to the idealistic images, gaps arise between these different categories of identities within the Mi'kmaq community.[24] Traditionalists, who in the 1970s emphasized the ethnic identity and revived old traditions, added an environmental engagement in the 1980s. The engagement in environmental issues was to turn out to be a powerful way of acquiring and responding to the romantic image of a Noble Savage.

A Mi'kmaq position against images

The developments of later years have given the Mi'kmaq a growing self-esteem. They now demand the right to more self-determination, i.e. to have their own courts, to administer the child-care system, and to control their education and social services. Since the Mi'kmaq think that the changes are possible within the constitution, these demands do not imply a dissolution of Canadian society. Georges Erasmus (*National Chief, Assembly of First Nations*), expresses how Native groups today emphasize their political demands:

> [W]e have not disappeared; we have survived, as we have done since long before the appearance of Europeans, against no matter what odds. Unfortunately, to the present day, governments have been unconscionably slow in coming to terms with the fact that we will always be here, and that our claims for justice, land, resources,

[23] Cf. Kajsa Ekholm Friedman's study of the Hawaiians (1998: 60).

[24] Prins (1996: 11): "not everyone has equal access to the available cultural repertoire of Mi'kmaq ethnicity."

> and control over our own affairs will never go away and must be fairly and honorably dealt with.[25]

It was important for the Mi'kmaq to get a Department of Mi'kmaq Studies at the University College of Cape Breton (UCCB) in Sydney. Mi'kmaq students and scholars now produced texts that criticized earlier writings about them and at the same time described a Mi'kmaq perspective: "We, as a proud Nation, must find a new productive avenue to help eliminate these attitudes and help other societies to better understand our nation and to be able to view us from a non-biased spectrum".[26] The critique of Western scholars concerns mostly what the Mi'kmaq experience as their shortcomings in analyzing the Mi'kmaq material. Westerners are said to picture only the surface of the data or reshape it so it will fit European models. The Mi'kmaq student Eleanor Johnson takes as an example a female scholar, Jeanne Guillemin, who has studied Mi'kmaq tribal consciousness. According to Johnson, Guillemin is a "cognitive tourist" and says that she is a good example of how Western scholars lack a deeper understanding of the Mi'kmaq spirit: "These 'cognitive tourists', such as Guillemin, come into the communities doing their fieldwork with preconceived notions or professional methodologies about the so-called Indians."[27] Johnson shows, however, a little condescension towards some of the Western scholars: "They're legitimate, maybe, in some studies but they ignore the heart of the people and this is what needs to be developed. This is what I was trying to do when I was writing 'Tribal Consciousness'. You know, look at us deeper than our statistics."[28]

In spite of their skeptical attitude to White scholars, the Mi'kmaq of today use scholars' texts in rewriting their history. They also criticize what they see as Canadian society's discursive historiography. Daniel Paul, who writes about the historical meeting between his people and the Europeans, gives the book the provocative title *We were not the Savages* and adds as a subheading "A *Mi'kmaq* [italics added] Perspective on the Collision". The title and subheading repudiate the idea that the Mi'kmaq were uncivilized and at the same time deliver a critique to the Europeans: "You were the savages". Paul takes the opportunity in his dedication to pay his tribute to the Mi'kmaq:

---

[25] Erasmus 1989: 11.
[26] Murdena Marshall (1991: 17) in "Introduction", *Paqtatek*, vol 1.
[27] Johnson 1991: 26.
[28] Johnson 1991: 14.

> The Micmac of today are the children of a truly, dignified, noble, courageous, and heroic people. For more than four centuries these people displayed a determination to survive the various hells on Earth created for them by Europeans with a tenacity that is unrivaled in the history of mankind. I, and all Micmac, take immense pride in their virtues![29]

Paul has a mission in his way of writing Mi'kmaq history:

> You have now read a history of one of the Native American Peoples, a people who gave their all to defend their home and country and fought courageously for survival. Based on what you now know, what is your honest judgment about *who were the barbarian savages* when the Europeans and Native Americans collided? Micmac civilization was a classic example of a free and independent people forming a society based upon the principle of mutual support and respect. This successful and productive civilization valued individual liberty above all else. It can be repaired and rebuilt. Won't you assist the Micmac to do it?[30]

Paul, like other Mi'kmaq, stresses that remaking their history has not only been a positive engagement but has also been combined with pain: "Writing this book was one of the hardest things I have ever done. I suffered excruciating mental anguish while researching the continual torment of my people."[31]

The "Lone Ethnographer's labors"?

The classical ethnographers often exhibited themselves as keeping an important distance from those they studied. During the fieldwork, the data were collected that were needed to give as grandiose and objective depiction of a culture as possible. Rosaldo describes in *Culture and Truth* (1989) the spirit in which the classical fieldwork was written as "the Lone Ethnographer's labors": "It portrayed a 'culture' sufficiently frozen to be an object of 'Scientific' knowledge. This genre of social description made itself, and the culture so described, into an artefact worthy of being housed in the collection of a major museum."[32] But today culture has been likened to a text, which is born

[29] Paul 1993: Dedication.
[30] Paul 1993: 340.
[31] Paul 1993: Foreword.
[32] Rosaldo 1993: 31.

rather in a dialogue between the ethnographer and his or her informants than as a reflection of an objective reality. The anthropologists must thus themselves be aware of their role in the study of other cultures. Field meetings become, like other meetings, a complex negotiation between the participants about a certain reality.[33]

I have participated in several meetings during my stays on the reserve at which different groups of people have acted. Some Mi'kmaq I have met only occasionally, others I have, during the years, spent time with in different contexts. The context of the gatherings is, of course, of great importance for how the individual will act.[34] It becomes important on some occasions to articulate a Mi'kmaq identity, e.g. in confrontations with authorities or on the cultural-awareness days. The emphasis on being a Mi'kmaq is not that important in other situations, e.g. during a visit to friends or relatives. The same Mi'kmaq may thus act towards me like a *shapeshifter*, but the changes have their explanation in the context given at a certain time.[35] The danger is that the scholar looks only at how an informant acts in one context and from this occasion abstracts a picture that will cover the whole personality of this person or worse, stand for a group of people.

But not only the Mi'kmaq are *shapeshifters*. The role in which I see myself also has consequences for my way of being-in-the-field and thereby for how the communication between the Mi'kmaq and me will turn out. I can be a passive observer during a political confrontation between the Mi'kmaq and the authorities, and a scholar in the history of religions with a package of concepts on how to analyze Mi'kmaq Catholicism on the feast of St. Anne or the pan-Indian features during a *powwow*. I can be a mother, who together with my two children and some Mi'kmaq children, cuddles kittens, and a wife who, together with my husband and a Mi'kmaq couple, shares some beer during the sunset. My role as fieldworker could also collapse, as it did when I participated in a sweat-lodge ceremony. All my scholastic ambitions to ana-

---

[33] Friedman 1994: 71; cf. Crapanzano 1980: xi: "My own obtrusive presence in his life not only enables Tuhami to tell his story: it also permits me the luxury of entering that allegory in the name of science that is unknown to him. Through that science, through anthropology, my position with respect to Tuhami is rationalized." Cf. Wagner 1979.

[34] Cf. Kurkiala 1997: 235.

[35] Åke Hultkrantz (1981) has with examples from Wind Rover Shoshoni shown how human belief can change in time and even from one situation to another. He calls the phenomenon "configurations of religious belief" (p. 29). The man who is looking for a homology in thought in traditional societies may be disappointed when myths and religious beliefs are not always complementary units. There has also been a tendency to view these societies as homogeneous systems, but they can contain contradictions (p. 28).

lyze the ritual disappeared when the heat became unbearable and I was fully occupied in struggling to survive. In the first case, I played a passive role and, if I influenced the communication between the Mi'kmaq and the authorities, it was only as a member of an audience whose silent approval or disapproval may have affected the actors. When I spent days with Mi'kmaq friends, strolling about in the beautiful landscape, watched television or drank tea, the thought of discussing identity or tradition was not at all present. It was only when I distanced myself from this everyday being and more actively asked questions that my friends began to reflect on their identity and lifeworld. This situation reminds me of what the Canadian media and journalists put the Mi'kmaq into; my presence created a kind of self-representation among them, which was further accentuated by my questions and negotiated in our meetings. To "be a Mi'kmaq" is hereby more actualized when I posit myself as a scholar than when I visit them as an old friend, a wife, a mother with my children or a tourist from Sweden.

The change between different social contexts actualizes reflections on one's own identity. The Canadian society may force the Mi'kmaq to play roles, so they can succeed with their work, but there is an awareness of being a part of this game. Rita Joe is one Mi'kmaq who, as a successful poet, has experienced such different contexts as the everyday life of the reserves and a formal banquet with Queen Elizabeth and she expresses this in a poem, *A Red-Skinned White Man*:

> I hop on a train, a bike, a Cadillac
> With a briefcase under my arm on a plane.
> My business suit of finest tweed
> With cufflinks of traditional azure
> My back is straight as I walk with pride
> To a convention, relying on my wits.
>
> I talk with confidence reinforced by a degree
> Waving my brown-skinned hands
> To emphasize a point.
> But I go back home to the reservation
> Being myself.
> And my work is done for the day
> Being a red-skinned white man

Expressing my dissatisfaction
The way our country is run.[36]

The lived world and the images

My examination of the 19th century and early 20th century texts showed how the romantic image of the Mi'kmaq was staged by Leland, among others. But life on the reserves was far from these romantic depictions. The Mi'kmaq's ability to acquire the images was limited at that time, since they could not read or write. The image of a "child of nature" helped a few of them to get jobs guiding tourists or as hunters on expeditions in the province. But they all now lived mainly on reserves and had to give up their former life as hunters.

Today the Mi'kmaq view nature as modern, educated inhabitants of reserves. But a stage in Canadian society, built a long time ago by Romanticists, is constantly waiting to be filled with wise "Indians" worshipping nature, and nevertheless plays an important role for Mi'kmaq spokesmen (or other indigenous groups). But to what extent are the Mi'kmaq dependent on these images and how much can they manipulate them to make their own voices heard? Questions like these have been discussed in postcolonial theories, e.g. by the scholar Gayatri Spivak who once raised the question: "Can the Subaltern speak?".[37] If the stage on which the Mi'kmaq are to act is entirely built up of romantic images and the roles to play are the "Indian", the answer to Spivak's question is "No". Their mission as actors is then only to play and interpret the role they have been given; that is what the manuscript allows. The discrepancy from the manuscript may either be too hard to understand or the audience may refuse to listen to the speaker. The alternative ways of thinking and acting are thus hard ways to tread for the subaltern. But, in contrast to novels and dramas, life is more than a text. The modern Mi'kmaq have access to the image (the text) and have managed today in a creative way to use it in their own way. When the Mi'kmaq traditionalist Sulian Stone Eagle

[36] Joe 1988/1991: 24.

[37] Spivak 1994. Spivak is a leading spokesperson for postcolonial literary theory. If postmodernists criticized the idea of a homologous human subject, the goal of the postcolonialists has been to undermine the imperial subject. If it is the colonialist who in texts hegemonically constructs his counterpart, the colonized cannot speak within this system. To refuse to place oneself in the ascribed role seriously challenges the hegemonic image and breaks down the conditions for a colonial, constructed subject. The observations by Spivak mostly concern fictional text analysis, and the subaltern cannot speak in this colonial literature, since it is in these texts that he or she is created and assigned the role as oppressed.

Herney protested in 1999 against clearfelling, it was what many expected from an "Indian". But Herney makes more of the protest. When he talks about the forest industry, he rhetorically uses an allusion to disputable political events in today's world: "My interpretation of selective cutting is that it is just another form of ethnic cleansing of all my relations."[38] The critique delivered by Herney may disturb people who rather want "Indian" statements on environmental issues to be romantic metaphors about saving nature and not to allude on Bosnian battlefields. The statements that the West would like to hear from "wise Indians" of how to take care of Mother Earth are not meant to seriously challenge society. They should function more as a nice portion of civilization or modernity critique.

It is not without risks for marginalized people to demand changes, if ingrained opinions and power relations are threatened. A person who breaks the pattern always runs the risk of being discredited in many ways. Since life is lived differently than the images, spokesmen are always at risk of being measured by the illusive picture. For an environmental activist who smokes, a communist who runs a factory or a Mi'kmaq who plays bingo, losing credibility in society at large is always at stake. The environmentalist should live up to an ideal of healthy living, the communist should not run a business and a Mi'kmaq should stroll about in nature and not in bingo halls. There is thereby a danger when either an individual or a group of people becomes more of a spokesman for an idea than a representative of a complex lifeworld. Individuals or groups of people may be forced to commit violent actions if they feel that their identity stands or falls by how good they are at managing controversial issues. There were spokesmen for Mi'kmaq Warriors, who officially warned people that, if necessary, they were ready to give their lives for the mountain. A Mi'kmaq told me at a *powwow* that violence might be the final solution, if the quarry company did not listen to the Mi'kmaq protests: "We'll stop them, even with guns, if we have to." With such high expectations of being successful in the mountain case, it must have been hard for the Mi'kmaq to witness passively their defeat. The demand to succeed thus grew stronger than the protection of their own lives.

Tendencies to discredit the "Indian" as an environmental conservationist, in both historical and modern times, may have one root in modern constructivist theories. If general respect for indigenous people has grown since the 1970s, there are at the same time tendencies among scholars to tear down the

[38] http.//www.net/~nben/envnews/media/99/mblo.htm

images that have created this respect: "It is indeed ironic − and psychologically puzzling − that so many anthropologists should now choose to direct their energies toward deconstructing the basis for this respect:"[39] In this cynical view, Indians are, not conservationists at all or, worse, they have even caused some of the historical catastrophes in nature.[40] But revealing obvious romantic images of the "Indian" does not imply that Natives do not have good resource management: "The opposite argument is not that indigenous people are somehow inherently (genetically?) prone to deal wisely with their environment, but that the social condition and mindframe of premodern existence contains elements which may be more conducive to wise management than the modern mindframe."[41]

The critique of the modern, Mi'kmaq, environmental engagement has been that it is only a modern feature. If everything said by a Mi'kmaq is only modern constructions, then everyone can speak like a Mi'kmaq. In the last chapter of my thesis, I shall therefore examine how spokesmen for the Mi'kmaq have their specific ways of meeting contemporary environmental issues. Modern society, education, the Green movement and a new possibility of acting in public have influenced the Mi'kmaq engagement and their protests, but just as important are tradition, spirituality and the life of the reserve. The authorities' attempt to establish a quarry at Kelly's Mountain had its origin in a way of thinking in which a mountain was a mountain. In the best case, it is protected for its beauty or, in the worst case, it is used as a source of gravel for building roads. If seen just as a mountain, it may be defended with ecological arguments even by the modern Mi'kmaq. But the mountain became more than this for them. It turned into an important symbol and a prophecy to the Mi'kmaq, and Mi'kmaq tradition and spirituality were woven together with the more secular interests to keep a beautiful place intact.[42]

A Green prelude

In the mid-1970s the forests on Cape Breton Island were affected by an insect (spruce budworm), which led Stora, a Swedish pulp mill company on the island, to apply for permission to spray certain areas. The spraying aroused

---

[39] Alf Hornborg 1998b: 160.

[40] Krech (1999) gives as examples the ruthless exploitation of beavers and the white-tailed deer, or soil exhaustion because of too much watering in the south-western USA.

[41] Alf Hornborg 1998b: 161; cf. Anderson 1996, Krech 1999.

[42] Cf. Kajsa Ekholm Friedman's study of the Hawaiians. The threatened island of Ka-ho'olawe grows into a symbol for the nation, the Hawaiian people (1998: 111).

strong protests among the islanders and resistance was organized. Among the protesters were highly educated immigrants from the USA, who took a leading part in the further environmental struggle. In spite of the protests, Nova Scotia Forest Industries (NSFI) in 1982 got the permit to spray the forest with homoslyr 2.4.D and 2.4.5-T. Homoslyr was used in the Vietnam war under the name of "Agent Orange" to strip the forest of its leaves.[43] The substances had been forbidden in Sweden, since it was said that they could cause cancer.[44] Besides that, the substances were suspected of being generally injurious to health, so hard critique was leveled against those multinational companies that used the poison in countries with a more liberal legislation.[45]

The decision to start spraying hardened the resistance, and 15 persons from Nova Scotia decided to sue the NSFI. Among the plaintiffs were Mi'kmaq representatives. The plaintiffs lost the case and were then sued by the company to pay the expensive court costs. The court decision quickly gave echoes in Sweden. The former Swedish "Welfare State" was now depicted as a country with multinational companies that oppressed indigenous peoples.[46] To support the plaintiffs and make the parent company, Stora Kopparberg, change their demands, a group in Sweden was constituted ("Stödkommittén för Nova Scotia"). In November 1983 this group invited three key persons from Nova Scotia to visit Sweden: Elisabeth May (lawyer and one of the plaintiffs' barristers), Liz Calder (teacher) and Ryan Googoo (Band Chief in Whycocomagh) to visit Sweden.

"An ordinary, worried, human being"

The protest against the spraying was the Mi'kmaqs' first organized resistance concerning environmental issues. The Mi'kmaq Indian, who had come to Sweden to show his discontent at how his people were treated, received most attention in the Swedish press. When Stora Kopparberg's spokesman at the main office in Falun first refused to meet the visitors, this was depicted in the media as a modernized version of a Western movie − the evil Whites against the good Indians. In a photo in the *Samefolket* newspaper, the disappointed

---

[43] *SIA. Skogsindustriarbetaren*, 1984, no. 3, pp. 22.

[44] *Samefolket*, 1983, no. 12, p. 11.

[45] *SIA. Skogsindustriarbetaren*, 1984, no. 6, pp. 34-35.

[46] *Samefolket*, 1983, no. 12, pp. 10. Stora Kopparberg was even awarded a prize as the environmental hooligan of the year. The prize was created by the art designer Staffan Svensson and shows a mean wolf: "The jaws of the big, bad wolf are nabbing Indian people in Nova Scotia" (*Dala-Demokraten*, 16 November 1983, p. 11).

Ryan Googoo shoots his fist at Stora Kopparberg: "For Ryan Googoo's ancestors among Mi'kmaq Indians this struggle is a matter of life and death."[47] The article continued by quoting a statement by Googoo:

> Micmac means the children of the dawn. We live far way out in the east, it is us who first meet the rising sun. It was also us who first met the Europeans, who came to our continent. We treated them well, we taught them how to survive in a country different than theirs. We helped them with the hunt, showed where fishing was good, what berries to eat. We have always been peaceful, too peaceful.[48]

The discontent increased towards the company. The managing director, Erik Sundblad, then invited the Canadian visitors to a short meeting. But the meeting did not give the delegation any positive answers and was therefore a great disappointment. In an interview in the newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*, Sundblad referred to the meeting and made a cynical comment on the attention that the spraying had attracted in the media:

> **DN**: How did the meeting with the spray protesters go?
> **ES**: I said that I understood that they had something to say, but that I would not like to make any comments. Then they thought there was no point in discussing their case. My impression is that, when the media are not around, it is not fun any longer.
> **DN**: Do you think this is just a matter of media attention?
> **ES**: I do not want to put it in that way.[49]

---

[47] *Samefolket*, 1983, no. 12, p. 12, my translation. Original Swedish text: "För Ryan Googoos stamfränder bland micmacindianerna innebär den här tvisten något av liv och död."

[48] *Samefolket*, 1983, no. 12, pp. 12, my translation. Original Swedish text: "Micmac betyder gryningens barn. Vi lever längst österut, det är vi som först möter den uppgående solen. Det var också vi som först mötte européerna, som kom till vår kontinent. Vi tog emot dem väl, vi lärde dem att överleva i ett land olikt deras. Vi hjälpte dem med jakten, visade var fisket var gott, vilka bär man kunde äta. Vi har alltid varit fredliga, för fredliga."

[49] *Dagens Nyheter*, 18 November 1983, p. 40, my translation. Original Swedish text:
DN: Hur avlöpte mötet med giftmotståndarna från Nova Scotia?
ES: Jag sa att jag förstod att de hade något att framföra, men att jag inte ville kommentera det. Då tyckte de inte att det var någon idé att framföra sitt ärende. Mitt intryck är att det inte var lika roligt när massmedia inte fick vara med.
DN: Anser du att det hela är ett massmediajippo?
ES: Det vill jag inte säga.

The journalists chose to focus much of their attention on Ryan Googoo. In *Dagens Nyheter*, he was the Mi'kmaq Chief [50] and had attributes of stoic wisdom: " Kindly the big Chief had let himself be shown around ... patiently he had watched ... Like an expert he had squeezed ... Politely he had listened ..."[51] In the *Dala-Demokraten* newspaper he carried "the wrath of his ancestors "[52] and in a later number the reader might learn that "The MicMac Indians live off the forest. They fish, hunt and plait baskets from the brushwood Stora Kopparberg wants to take away."[53] But, in spite of all the idealizing images of the "Indian", it was the more profane facts that Googoo based his arguments on:

> Then Stora Kopparberg came. They promised us work. We got this at the start, but then the machines came. Now we are on welfare again. 98 percent are unemployed. The forest is our hunting grounds. The poison from Stora Kopparberg will go right into our water supply.[54]
>
> The area Stora Kopparberg is going to spray does not belong to them. It is so-called 'Crown land', extra land if the reserves should need to expand, our hunting grounds that the government has illegally hired out to big forest companies …
> For us there is an economic aspect in this matter. The brushwood they are going to exterminate we use in our traditional basket-

[50] To describe Googoo as the Mi'kmaq Chief strengthened his position, but it is a modified truth. Googoo was *Band Chief* in Whycocomagh, one of the many Mi'kmaq reserves in the province. The Grand Chief is the chief who holds the leading position among all Mi'kmaq.

[51] *Dagens Nyheter*, 17 November 1983, p. 64, my translation. Original Swedish text: " Snällt hade den store hövdingen låtit sig vallas ... tålmodigt hade han betraktat ... Sakkunnigt hade han klämt på ... Artigt hade han lyssnat ".

[52] *Dala-Demokraten*, 9 November 1983, p. 7, my translation: "förfädernas vrede" The headline of the article − "Indian families are forced to abandon their farms" – is incomprehensible since the Mi'kmaq do not possess any farms. The mistake must have originated from the fact that some of the White protesters were farmers defending their land against spraying.

[53] *Dala-Demokraten*, 16 November 1983, p. 11, my translation. Original Swedish text: "MicMac-indianerna lever av vad skogen ger. De fiskar, jagar och tillverkar korgar av lövsly som Stora Kopparberg vill ta död på."

[54] *Dala-Demokraten*, 9 November 1983, p. 7, my translation. Original Swedish text: "Så kom Stora Kopparberg. De lovade oss arbete. Det fick vi i början men så kom maskinerna. Nu går vi på socialhjälp igen. 98 procent är arbetslösa. Skogen är vår jaktmark. Stora Kopparbergs gifter kommer att gå rakt i vår vattenreserv."

> plaiting, something that gives a needed extra income in a reserve where the unemployment rate is 98 %![55]

One journalist, Eva Bjärnlund, chose to look upon Googoo more as a "real" person than as an "Indian":

> Then Ryan Googoo came, a Mi'kmaq. He had NO feathers, NO long hair, NO 'Indian dress' − but he made people listen to the things he had to say ... Thanks, Stora Kopparberg, for getting the press and people to support an Indian with short, cropped hair. An ordinary, worried, human being.[56]

But the protests did not lead to any results and the disappointment was great, especially for Googoo. Before he went home, he announced that a harder fight would come:

> Then there is nothing more left but to fight.[57]

> My tribe, the Micmac, has never taken any violent actions before, but we have decided. We will do anything to stop the spraying.[58]

---

[55] *Indianbulletinen*, 1983 no. 4, p. 4, my translation. Original Swedish text: " Området som Stora Kopparberg tänker bespruta tillhör inte dem. Det är s k "kronland", reservland att ha om indianreservaten skulle behöva utvidgas, våra jaktmarker som regeringen olagligt hyrt ut till stora skogsbolag ...
För oss finns det också en ekonomisk sida av saken, fortsätter han. Den lövsly de tänker utrota använder vi i vår traditionella korgtillverkning, något som ger välbehövliga extrainkomster på ett reservat där arbetslösheten ligger på 98 %!"

[56] *Indianbulletinen*, 1983 no. 4, p. 2, my translation. Original Swedish text: "Så kom Ryan Googoo, mi'kmaq. Han hade INTE fjädrar, INTE långt hår, INTE "indiandräkt" − men han fick folk att lyssna på det han hade att säga ... Tack, Stora Kopparberg för att massmedia och folk ställt upp på en kortklippt indian. En vanlig, orolig människa."

[57] *Dagens Nyheter*, 17 November 1983, p. 64, my translation. Original Swedish text: "Då återstår inget annat än att slåss."

[58] *Dala-Demokraten*, 9 November 1983, p. 7, my translation. Original Swedish text: "Min stam, Micmac, har aldrig gått till våldsaktioner förut, men vi har bestämt oss. Vi kommer att göra allt för att stoppa besprutningen."

The modern warrior

A battle with headband and drums

> I have always wanted to be an Indian myself, Ola said. And it has become worse through the years."[59]

Ryan Googoo, Elisabeth May and Liz Calder went back to Nova Scotia at the end of November. Five years later, in 1988, a new delegation arrived in Sweden to protest further against Stora's forest policies. One of the delegates was a Mi'kmaq, Charles (Junior) Bernard. The visit was strategic in its timing, since Stora Kopparberg that year celebrated its 700th anniversary. The meeting with the new managing director, Bo Berggren, was a disappointment for Bernard. His demands were, like his predecessor Googoo's, both political, economic and environmental: Stora is thinking only of profit, is killing the forests and is poisoning the drinking water when spraying the soft wood.[60] The clearing of the forests could be done manually, said Bernard,[61] and thus create more jobs. However, the Swedish newspaper *Expressen* showed a picture of Bernard after his meeting with Berggren, in which with a big smile he hugs the happy manager from Stora. But the newspaper adds that the picture is lying. The two men are "not as agreed as it seems."[62]

When Bernard realized what a public-relations victory this picture was for Stora, he did not raise his fist as Googoo did. He sats down outside the main office of Stora and went on a hunger strike. Even though the media had shown an interest in the Indian image, Googoo himself had appeared as an "ordinary" person. Now the papers are blazoning out a picture of an "Indian" who wears a headband and is "drumming monotonously on a drum".[63]

At the time of his visit in Sweden, Bernard was 25 years old and represented the new wave of traditionalism that had spread on the reserves during

---

[59] My translation. Original Swedish text: "Jag har alltid velat vara indian själv, säger Ola. Och det blir bara värre med åren." The quote is from *Dagens Nyheter*, 13 November 1988, p. 72, and the words are from the cartoonist Ola Ambjörnson. The statement has no connection with the Mi'kmaq visit in June the same year, but is of interest, since it says something about the Indian images that at intervals whirl around in the media and are picked up by the readers.

[60] *Dala-Demokraten*, 16 June 1988, p. 9.

[61] *Dala-Demokraten*, 21 June 1988, p. 6.

[62] *Expressen*, 19 June 1988, p. 10, my translation. Original Swedish text: "Inte så överens som det ser ut ".

[63] *Dala-Demokraten*, 21 June 1988, p. 6, my translation. Original Swedish text: "trummar entonigt på en trumma".

the last few years.[64] During the latter part of the 1980s, the Mi'kmaq had appeared at environmental demonstrations in Nova Scotia. They were welcomed by other activists, since, by their presence, they gave weight to the protests. Although Bernard's attributes were pan-Indian (the drum, the headband), his arguments were highly profane and his protest a peaceful one. The Mi'kmaq were now used to cooperating with environmental groups and this had increased both their environmental awareness and their rhetorical skill when they discussed environmental issues. But when the environmental threats affected them more particularly, their engagement was to change character. Their attitude was to harden, and a militant way of acting began to grow. Further on, a new dimension would be added to the economic, political and ecological demands: Mi'kmaq spirituality. The Mi'kmaqs' new, militant stand was influenced by the Oka crisis, and in the struggle of Kelly's Mountain, the Mi'kmaq began to formulate their protest in spiritual terms.

Fighting in military uniforms

The beginning of a more militant attitude among the Mi'kmaq traditionalists concerning environmental issues began in the summer of 1990 with a struggle against a golf course. The battle did not really concern the Mi'kmaq but the Mohawk and took place in Montreal. The golf course had been built in 1959, in spite of the protests from Natives, since it was laid out on their land. Now the local government wanted to enlarge the course, which would trespass upon a Mohawk burial ground. In March 1990, the protests started with a peaceful demonstration, in which Mohawk women carried out a wake against the plans for exploitation.[65]

During the summer, the battle hardened. The Mohawk were now organized in a militant group, the "Warriors' Society", and refused to yield to the authorities. In the Kahnawake (Caughnawahga) reserve, the inhabitants shut off a highway and a bridge (Mercier Bridge) that carries one of the important routes back and forth to Montreal. The blockade caused great irritation among Montreal citizens, who had to take long detours to the city. The conflict escalated into a stand-off. When the police attacked the barricades in July, shooting occurred, and a policeman was killed.

News of the Oka conflict quickly spread via the media all over Canada. People could watch not only the Mohawk in military uniforms with masked

[64] Alf Hornborg 1998c: 207.
[65] *Fjärde Världen*, 1995, no. 1, p. 26.

faces on television, but also irritated French Canadians burning dolls that looked like Mohawk Warriors. The Canadian Government got tired of negotiating and called in the military in August. The conflict had lasted for 11 weeks, and letters of sympathy for the Mohawk rolled in from Europe. The letter-writers also sent strong protests to the Canadian Government against its actions.

There were several Mi'kmaq who wanted to support the Mohawk struggle. Some of them went to Oka to help the barricaded Mohawk by bringing medicine and food into their camps.[66] If the Mi'kmaq had earlier participated in peaceful protests, they now had to experience how easily these protests could turn into violence and shootings. A Mi'kmaq traditionalist was greatly influenced by the ongoing threat of violence. This is how he recalled the event:

> During the Oka stand-off we were witnesses to many cruelties. Both food and water were running out ... There was no medicine. UN observers were attacked, so also women and children. One night, I was standing on guard. 3 000 non-natives with canes attacked us. We saw how they took out dead babies out of their coffins, because they suspected that weapons were hidden there. We watched soldiers forcing women to the ground to urinate in their mouths. One 18-year-old girl was pierced by a bayonet because she crossed the street where there were no traffic lights.[67]

The military forces finally ended the battle. But the Mohawk had won a victory. They had, with their hard resistance, managed to prevent the building of a larger golf course. The Oka battle became a symbol in other struggles between the authorities and Native groups. It represented the old, ongoing struggle between Natives and non-Natives:

> Oka was a classical instance of the continued put down of the Indian, that has been on-going and perpetrated by the dominant soci-

---

[66] *Chronicle-Herald*, 27 March 1993, p. B:2.

[67] *Fjärde Världen*, 1995, no. 1, p. 10, my translation. Original Swedish text: "Under Oka-striden var vi vittnen till många hemskheter. Det saknades både mat och vatten ... Det fanns ingen medicin. FN-observatörer attackerades, likaså kvinnor och barn. En natt stod jag på vakt. 3000 icke-indianer med käppar anföll oss. Vi har sett hur de tagit ut döda bebisar ur deras kistor, för att de har misstänkt att det finns vapen gömda. Vi har fått se hur soldater tvingat ner kvinnor på marken för att urinera i deras munnar. En 18-årig flicka blev genomborrad av en bajonett på grund av att hon var på väg över gatan där det inte fanns trafikljus".

> ety for hundreds and hundreds of years. It is a case of the powered élite overpowering a powerless society, which in turn builds a sense of rage, frustration and further alienation in the society. It boils down to the condescending message of Canada saying to the Native community, "You don't belong with us, so do as you're told."[68]

But this time the fight had another ending. The strong Native protests had a result. The Mi'kmaqs' experiences at Oka would soon become actualized within their own territory. Word got about that one of their traditional places was threatened.

Tradition as a weapon

The granite quarry

In 1989, Grand Chief Donald Marshall contacted one of the Mi'kmaq Warriors to investigate whether the rumors were true about the opening of a proposed granite quarry at Kelly's Mountain on Cape Breton Island.[69] The rumors were true, the plans were already advanced. A local corporation (Kelly Rock) planned to open a "superquarry" – one of the three largest in the world. Every week 150,000 tons of crushed gravel would be transported in ships carrying 60,000 tons to the eastern United States. The mining would last for 20-40 years, according to the calculations. By opening the mountain from the top, the so-called "glory hole method", the mining company guaranteed that the visibility of the operation would be minimized. However, new buildings and facilities were needed for the mining, i.e. a large shipping wharf, administrative buildings, crushers, stockpiles, conveyor belts, etc.[70] This establishment was put forward as an opportunity to create new jobs in an area where the closed coal-mines and restrictions on the cod-fishing had generated a high percentage of unemployment, compared with other parts of Canada. The local

---

[68] *MMNN*, September 1994, no. 9, p. 9.

[69] *MMNN*, February 1992, no. 2, p. 26.

[70] *Chronicle-Herald*, 27 March 1993, p. B:1; cf. *Kelly's Mountain Newsletter* (an information paper published by the Save Kelly's Mountain Society); see also Alf Hornborg 1994: 246. Some of the rich material that my husband and I collected during our stay on Cape Breton Island from August 1992 to May 1993 is published in my husband's article "Environmentalism, ethnicity and sacred places: Reflections on modernity, discourse and power" in *Canad. Rev. Soc. & Anth.* 31 (3) 1994. The article refers to how the discussions about the quarry were carried forward by the authorities and representatives of the Mi'kmaq, local activist groups and different environmental groups (from Greenpeace to deep ecologists). The discussions serve as a starting-point in the article for a broader examination of modern identity construction, discourse and power.

people very soon split into two camps, one positive and one negative to the quarry. Some saw it as a final solution to get rid of their dependence on welfare, but others feared that the project would threaten tourism, local fishing and above all, the beautiful mountain. For many, the mountain had been a part of their lives since they were children and it made them feel "at home". There were also many persons all over the province who had earlier been engaged in environmental issues and organizations (e.g. Greenpeace). They now mobilized a defense for the mountain and formed action groups (e.g. the Save Kelly's Mountain Society).

Confrontation

When the plans for the superquarry reached the Mi'kmaq in September 1989, some traditionalists organized a peaceful chanting and drumming ceremony in Englishtown, a little village close to Kelly's Mountain.[71] One of them, who said he represented the Grand Chief, explained that the quarry plans were an insult to both the Mi'kmaq and Mother Earth. The Mi'kmaq asserted that the mountain and its cave were the home of Kluskap. An exploitation of the mountain would mean that they would lose a part of their culture. Furthermore, they said that the fishing would be threatened, an important by-income. There were also some traditionalists who requested that all Mi'kmaq bands should organize their protests and demand a historical and archaeological mapping of the mountain.

A change in the Mi'kmaq argumentation could be discerned already in October 1990. A number of Mi'kmaq then showed up in army uniforms at a meeting with the Kelly Rock company president (Dave MacKenna). "At all costs", they said, "we will blockade the road to the quarry. We are preparing for war."[72] Their attitude had now become more militant. As mentioned earlier, soldiers and the Mohawk had fought each other in Oka some weeks previously. This struggle had inspired some of the Mi'kmaq to join their "brothers". With the Mohawk as a role model, they also chose to organize themselves in a militant group, the Mi'kmaq Warrior Society. The mission of these more militant Mi'kmaq was to protect the people, the land and the laws.[73] The members of the Mi'kmaq Warrior Society could now use their experiences from the Oka incident in their resistance to the quarry. The new, militant attitude is clearly displayed in an interview with a Mi'kmaq warrior,

[71] *Cape Breton Post*, 26 September 1989.
[72] *Harrowsmith*, January-February 1991.
[73] *MMNN*, March 1994, no. 3, p. 4.

Sulian Stone Eagle Herney. He tells us that he was one of those who fought in Oka. If needed, he says, the Mohawk have promised to help their Mi'kmaq friends in the struggle to protect Kelly's Mountain. Earlier in 1989, this Mi'kmaq warrior had peacefully drummed his protests, but now he warned that the struggle would be without any compromises:

> The Micmac are willing to back their own cause, adds Herney. He has an AK-47 assault rifle, several handguns and other weapons in his own home. Herney says he won't take his own guns to the mountain, but others may make a different decision ... He believes a confrontation is likely, and he will be part of it.
> 'Either I'm going to wind up dead, or I'll spend time in prison.'[74]

Two years later, in 1992, the quarry plans were once again compared with the plans for the golf course in Oka: "There is very little difference between a golf course and a strip mine. It's always the same − greed versus our sacred lands."[75] In March, at a meeting in Eskasoni about the future of the mountain, Herney warned other participants (authorities and environmental activists) that the Mi'kmaq might use violence: "Take this to your heart before you wind up attending one of our funerals. It's not a threat but a mere fact ... I will sooner die on that mountain than live on my reserve and have to face the coming generations and explain to them why the mountain is not there."[76] One year later, in 1993, the same Mi'kmaq warrior emphasized that the fight had not faded away. A journalist described in an interview how serious the struggle was for the Warrior:

> Herney, war chief of the little known Micmac Warrior Society, is issuing stern warnings that a devoted group of Micmacs who follow the traditional ways is willing to take up arms and die to protect the mountain. The quarry will go ahead over his dead body, he says. 'Some of our men have pledged to die before they see such a quarry'.[77]

---

[74] *Toronto Star*, 20 June 1991, p. A: 21.
[75] *MMNN*, February 1992, no. 2, p. 26.
[76] Video recording from Eskasoni in 1992.
[77] *Chronicle-Herald*, 27 March 1993, p. B: 2.

The seriousness behind the protests was also put forward by the same traditionalist in Arvidsjaur, in Sweden, in the summer of 1994 at a conference for indigenous people (Indigenous Forum 1994). The Mi'kmaq speaker informed the audience about Kelly's Mountain, the plans for a superquarry and how his people were struggling to keep the mountain intact:

> I do not want to see the mountain destroyed. I have not chosen to live on this planet if my struggle should be a failure. If they do not kill me, I will commit suicide. I cannot continue to live on this planet without my mountain. Even if that should mean that I will not be with my little son any longer.[78]

The Canadian authorities responded to the Mi'kmaq protests by establishing a panel with the task of investigating the environmental consequences of the Kelly's Mountain project. The Union of Nova Scotia Indians (UNSI) immediately put forward a claim to be represented on this panel. The UNSI wanted to add a further view to the directive that the panel had worked on ["Environmental Assessment Review" (EAR)]. In addition to the land interests and the environmental considerations (from the Mi'kmaq, as well as from environmental groups), it was of special importance for them to emphasize that the mountain was holy to the Mi'kmaq:

> Kelly's Mountain and the surrounding area, including Bird Island, have an historic, cultural and spiritual significance to the Mi'kmaq. The Mountain is the site to which the Mi'kmaq prophet or deity Kluskap (Glooscap) is to return. There is an important cave on the Mountain connected to Kluskap.[79]

---

[78] *Fjärde Världen,* 1995, no 1, p. 13, my translation. Original Swedish text: "Jag vill inte se berget förstöras. Jag har valt att inte fortsätta att bo på den här planeten om min kamp misslyckas. Om de inte dödar mig kommer jag att ta mitt eget liv. Jag kommer inte att kunna fortsätta att bo på den här planeten utan mitt berg. Även om det innebär att jag inte kommer att kunna vara med min lille son mer." At the meeting, Sulian Stone Eagle Herney was a spokesman for the First Nations Environmental Network and tried, among other things, to put some pressure on the Canadian Government to have Kelly's Mountain declared a protected area (my own notes from the conference).

[79] The Union of Nova Scotia Indians, 18 April 1991; *Submission of Union of Nova Scotia Indians on Final Guidelines*. The demand to include a Mi'kmaq on the panel was raised on 2 May: "We believe it vital that an aboriginal person be added to the Panel, and hereby request that you do so ... the Mi'kmaq interest in Kelly's Mountain and the project is of such magnitude that the Panel's composition must be adjusted." The Nova Scotia Department of the Environment answered (the answer is stamped 22 May 1991): "As the preliminary

The UNSI described their additions to the guiding principles for the Kelly's Mountain project in: "A description of the pre-contact, historical, cultural, spiritual and religious significance of Kelly's Mountain and the adjacent areas, including St. Ann's Bay, Bird Island and the Bras d'Or Lakes to the Mi'kmaq [Micmac] people."[80] According to the final guidelines issued a month later, it is clear that the Nova Scotia Department of the Environment had responded to the spiritual demand: "A description of the historic, cultural, spiritual, and religious significance of Kelly's Mountain to the Mi'kmaq people,"[81] A member of the Mi'kmaq Grand Council, John Joe Sark,[82] was also given a seat on the panel. This was a result of the new consideration that the mountain was a holy place to the Mi'kmaq.

But the Mi'kmaq protests were also met with skepticism. A letter to the editor of the *Cape Breton Post* doubted that the area had ever been the traditional hunting and fishing grounds of the Mi'kmaq: "Sure they walked there, but didn't they walk everywhere?"[83] The president of the Kelly Rock company, Dave MacKenna, said that the Mi'kmaq were only taken the opportunity to strengthen further their demand for rights to the land: "I'm sure that (radical) natives will try and use this to further their cause", noting that the quarry was 3.5 kilometers from the Micmac caves: "They're trying to bring the land-claims issue to the fore".[84] Whycocomagh's Band Chief immediately responded to MacKenna's cynical statement: "We don't need Kelly's Mountain to promote our land claims. The issue is, they want to remove something that cannot be replaced. You don't do that."[85]

The Mi'kmaqs' references to the treaties could be critically discussed by the authorities and the fear of environmental destruction could be countered with promises of good technical solutions. But to question whether the

---

stages of the review progress we are becoming more aware of the significance of the Kelly's Mountain area to the Mi'kmaq people. This realization supports the need for a person to explain the linkages and importance of Mi'kmaq culture, tradition and spirituality to the review of this project."

[80] The Union of Nova Scotia Indians, 18 April 1991: *Submission of Union of Nova Scotia Indians on Final Guidelines*.

[81] The Nova Scotia Department of the Environment: *Environmental Assessment Report. Final Guidelines for the Preparation of Terms of Reference*, 8 May 1991.

[82] Sark also had the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Prince Edward Island.

[83] *Cape Breton Post*, 3 March 1990, p. 5.

[84] *Inverness Oran*, 13 February 1991.

[85] The interview will be found as a press cutting in the booklet entitled *The battle of Kelly's Mountain*, which was published by the Save Kelly's Mountain Society. The group cooperated with the Mi'kmaq, who had organized their own resistance group, the Sacred Mountain Society.

mountain was a sacred place to the Mi'kmaq was not that easy. Even today it does not seem that the plans for a quarry will be realized. Many explain it as a failure of the Kelly Rock company to fulfill their commitments.[86] Some say that the environmental activists did a good job. Others say that the project proved not to be profitable. With the Oka crisis still in mind, the authorities maybe also feared that the Mi'kmaq would use violence if their mountain was threatened. Furthermore, the Mi'kmaq had managed to spread successfully their message in the media. One of the Mi'kmaq representatives was fully aware of the attention that the issue had attracted: "So I don't think any Dave MacKenna or any other company will ever be able to go to that mountain and attempt to make a superquarry out of it. I don't think the world community will allow it."[87]

To be a Mi'kmaq: ascribed images and the power to control them

The open confrontations with Canadian society gave the Mi'kmaq a lot of opportunities to show their distinctiveness and their traditions. Kelly's Mountain became for them a further example of a colonial discourse in which the White interests were allowed to continue. The media swung to and fro between depicting the Indian as a victim and as a "savage" who solved conflicts by violence and not by peaceful dialogues. In one interview, the journalist (J) by his questions depicted the Mi'kmaq as victims of cultural harassment. The interviewed Mi'kmaq traditionalist (T) immediately responded to this and saw a chance to emphasize further the colonial oppression of the Mi'kmaq:

> J: ... This Kelly's Mountain seems to me to represent almost the last straw. If you touch that, then this is just another attempt at destroying your culture.
> T: Well, you have to look at it you know ... Since the arrival of the Europeans there's been one constant assault, assault, and assault ... Residential schools, you've got smallpox-infested blankets, the

[86] Dalby 1999: 10.
[87] Dalby 1999: 12.

> bounty hunter, the total destruction of our Beothuk brothers in Newfoundland ...[88]

In another interview, the emphasis was more on the threats in the struggle. In the *Chronicle-Herald*, the journalist spiced his article with a large picture of a Mi'kmaq Warrior Society leader. This time he was not peacefully drumming, but, with a military beret on his head, he sternly looked at the reader and explained that he and other Warriors were prepared to use weapons to protect the mountain.[89]

It cannot be emphasized enough how important the media were for the development of the debate, not only in the province but also nationally and internationally. There was even a group of Aborigines in Australia who circulated a petition that demanded an end to the quarry project.[90] The indigenous groups and their problems were also more in focus then usual at the beginning of the 1990s, since the UN had proclaimed 1993 as the International Year for the World's Indigenous People. The Mi'kmaq were fully aware of this. They sent out protest lists and urgently requested the reader to fill in his or her name and address. Then the protests were to sent back to a spokesman for the Sacred Mountain Society:

> PETITION
>
> 1993 IS BEEN PROCLAIMED INTERNATIONAL YEAR FOR THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE. THE YEAR 1993 IS ALSO TARGETED FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SUPER QUARRY ON KLUSCAP'S MOUNTAIN (KELLY'S MOUNTAIN). IT IS A HISTORICAL, AND SACRED MOUNTAIN TO THE MI'KMAQ FIRST NATION. WE DEMAND THAT THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT PUT A STOP TO THIS OUT RIGHT DISPLAY OF CULTURAL DISRESPECT TO THE FIRST NATION PEOPLE OF TURTLE ISLAND. THE SACRED MOUNTAIN IS THE LAST OF THE ORIGINALITY THAT IS LEFT US AFTER 500 YEARS SINCE THE ARRIVAL OF THE NEW COMERS. PLEASE ALLOW US THIS MUCH. WE NEED THE SUPPORT OF ALL PEOPLE TO STOP THIS INSULT BEFORE IT BECOMES A REALITY.

---

[88] Tape recordings (Alf Hornborg 1994: 249).
[89] *Chronicle-Herald*, 27 March 1993, p. B: 1.
[90] *Chronicle-Herald*, 27 March 1993, p. B: 1.

People were also requested to send their protest lists to Sheila Munro, who took care of the information concerning the Kelly's Mountain issue. In these lists, there were references to the UN's proclamation of an International Year for the World's Indigenous People and statements that the quarry plans were an insult to the Mi'kmaq, one of the indigenous groups in Canada:

> "LETTERS OF PROTEST"
> ATT. MS. SHEILA MUNRO INFORMATION OFFICER.
> I OF _____ PROV. OR STATE_____ A TOURIST, RESIDENT, FIRST NATION PERSON WHO VISIT OR LIVES IN CAPE BRETON N.S. WISHES TO FILE AN OFFICIAL PROTEST TO THE FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PANEL REVIEWING THE KELLY'S MOUNTAIN (KLUSCAP) QUARRY PROJECT. I BELIEVE THAT ANY DESTRUCTION OF THIS VERY HISTORICAL, CULTURAL AND SACRED MOUNTAIN WILL TAKE AWAY FROM CAPE BRETON A SPECIAL MONUMENT THAT CAN NEVER BE REPLACED. IT WILL NOT ONLY TAKE AWAY FROM THE BEAUTY OF CAPE BRETION BUT IT WOULD ALSO CAUSE THE DESTRUCTION OF ONE OF THE OLDEST SACRED SITE TO THE MI'KMAQ POPULATION OF ALL THE ATLANTIC PROVINCES. BECAUSE THE YEAR 93 HAS BEEN NAMED AS THE YEAR FOR THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF TURTLE ISLAND IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT WE SHOULD NOT INSULT THE FIRST NATION PEOPLE BY THIS UNFORGIVABLE ACT OF DISRESPECT TO A VERY SACRED SITE ...

The Sacred Mountain Society encouraged private persons, as much as possible, to write or phone the different authorities to support the resistance. Addresses and phone numbers of important persons in connection with the issue, are listed. First, the reader is asked to phone or write to Sheila Munro to get the protest registered. Then the following names are given: the Prime Minister of Canada, the local politician in the Parliament, the UN in Geneva, the Human Rights Commission in Canada and the Department of Indian Affairs. A special request is added to give a donation to some named Mi'kmaq to be used in the struggle.

The UN proclamation of an International Year for the World's Indigenous People prompted an inquiry on how to support the indigenous groups in pro-

tecting their most important cultural properties.[91] The UN's Working Group on Indigenous Populations sent out general directions to investigate the issue. These directions also reached the Mi'kmaq. The applicant is asked in the guidelines to be as detailed as possible in the descriptions:

> Description of the sacred site or object
>
> ... describe the nature and use of the site or object. Where is it? What does it look like? What do you do with it, and how did your people first come to know it and use it? What is its history ...
>
> Identification of the traditional custodians
> Who was the traditional custodian or guardian of site of object? Were these responsibilities entrusted to a single family or clan, to a special religious society or organisation, or to particular individuals? ... If rules have changed, refer to both the traditional rules and those which are currently followed.
>
> Traditional principles of access and/or use
> Who could visit, see, or use this site or object, and under what circumstances or conditions? Who decided who could see it or use it? ... How was the site or object protected against improper uses? Once again, if rules have changed, refer to both the traditional rules and those which are currently followed.
>
> Contemporary issues of control and protection
> What steps are currently being taken to continue to protect this site or object from damage, loss, or improper use? Who has effective control of it? Have there been any recent disputes over the control, ownership, or use of this site or object? ...
>
> Measures needed for future protection
> Are you seeking any changes in national laws or policies to help you protect this site of object in the future? ... What steps would you like to take by yourselves? ...[92]

---

[91] Cultural properties are here defined as sacred places, ceremonial objects, historical documents and works of art.

[92] The letter is signed by James Youngblood Henderson, of the Apamukek Institute on the Eskasoni reserve. Henderson was at this time teaching at the Department of Mi'kmaq Studies at the University College of Cape Breton in Sydney, Cape Breton Island.

The detailed questions in the circular made many people reflect about their traditions. Many Mi'kmaq would maybe manage quite adequately to describe their cultural heritage, in the way requested. But there is a great danger in splitting up culture into different components. Each part could then be an object of negotiation, just as the authorities refuted the ecological arguments one by one in the Kelly's Mountain debate.[93] The references to a sacred mountain made it harder to meet the Mi'kmaqs' arguments, since the authorities were not used to discussing spiritual values side by side with plans for a secular industrial project. The struggle would later be a contest between the authorities' attempts to put the questions about sacredness into a language that was manageable for the bureaucrats, and the Mi'kmaq's resistance to this, which was to formulate a counter-language that would be immunized against bureaucratic control. Besides the reference to a sacred tradition, the concept of Mother Earth and the image of the ecological Indian would be important weapons in the battle. The Mi'kmaq spokesmen were highly aware of the strength of these images, and they used them skillfully. They were also well acquainted with the Catholic tradition and holy places, and they had learned the environmental rhetoric during the 1970s and the 1980s. Their cooperation with environmental activists in the battle for the mountain would make them further acquainted with both ecological and deep ecological concepts. They had in different ways met Canadian society's statements about them or other "Indians", and they had watched television series about Kluskap or Native traditions. For those who were interested, there were plenty of opportunities to look into archives and read about their ancestors or to use the historical or ethnographic literature at the library. But the Mi'kmaq did not passively take over the concepts and images. Instead they skillfully parried the White man's images of them. Sometimes the concepts or the conventional images were used, sometimes protested against and sometimes transcended in a constructive way to the benefit of the Mi'kmaq.

---

[93] Alf Hornborg (1994: 251) writes that the attempts in the Kelly's Mountain debate to break down the environmental problems into "valued ecosystems components" were an attempt to insert the problems into a rational, bureaucratic discourse which in the long run could cause the destruction of the mountain: "This approach immediately defines the proper relationship to the mountain as one of analysis, fragmentarization and objectification, rather than holism and participation. Turning a mountain into gravel is facilitated by first breaking it down conceptually." Cf. Evernden 1985/1993: 9: "Where once only an anguished cry could be expected in defense of a threatened mountain or an endangered species, now a detailed inventory and a benefit-cost analysis are sure to be forthcoming. The system will say all that needs to be said about the mountain – and say it with numbers."

An important argument against the quarry concerned who had the rights to the resources in the area. The Mi'kmaq claimed that according to the treaties, both Kelly's Mountain and Bird Islands belonged to them. The land claims included the hunting and fishing rights in the area. The huge quarry would limit the opportunities to use the land:

> Mi'kmaq traditionally harvested eggs and fowl on Bird Island. The Mi'kmaq have an existing, aboriginal land interest in the site at which the quarry would operate ... This includes the right to harvest and use the resources on the site, including rights in relation to the rock itself. The effect of the project, should it proceed, would be to strip the Mi'kmaq of those rights by destroying the land itself.[94]

In addition to the treaties, the Mi'kmaq gave environmental arguments for their engagement. In an article entitle *Why we should preserve Kelly's Mountain*, a number of rational reasons are given: "Here are some factors that will blow your mind: Up to 150,000 tons of rock per week will be washed and loaded on to 60,000 ton ships. The mountain would be one of the largest strip mines in the world. Plans are to blast half a million tons once a month ..."[95] The article shows that the Mi'kmaq spokesman was well prepared on the issue and that the Mi'kmaq also supported the environmental arguments from the Save Kelly's Mountain Society: the quarry would threaten local fishing and the tourist business. Greenpeace had warned of coming demonstrations.[96] But to the more secular arguments that the environmental groups put forward, the Mi'kmaq added spiritual reasons. Central in these spiritual values was the concept of Mother Earth.

Mother Earth has often been used as a symbol for respecting nature, mainly among Indian groups. The concept has been referred to as a "hallmark of American Indian spirituality".[97] This concept, however, is much debated among scholars. Hultkrantz mentions that there is a common belief in a Mother goddess in North American Indian religions. He quotes Smohalla (a Chief of the Shahapt Indians in the 1880s), to show its occurrence in the traditional societies. In spite of the hard pressures from the colonizers, Smohalla

---

[94] *MN*, 26 April 1991, no. 9, p. 5.
[95] *MMNN*, Feb. 1992, no. 2, p. 26.
[96] *Chronicle-Herald*, 27 March 1993, p. B: 1.
[97] Porterfield 1990: 158.

refused to settle down and be a farmer. He said he did not want to hurt his "mother's bosom".[98] The same quotation is an important point of departure for Gill in his analysis of the concept in *Mother Earth: An American Story* (1987). He sees that the references to Mother Earth in older ethnographic literature are mainly the Smohalla quote and an earlier statement by a leader of the Shawnee, Tecumseh. But these quotations should be interpreted metaphorically rather than theologically, according to Gill, since they were uttered in tense situations concerning the rights to the land. Gill does not want to speak about "Indian religion" in general terms but rather to examine specific cultural expressions. He states, as does Hultkrantz, that many Native groups have goddesses: "First Woman" among the Navajo, "Spider Woman" among the Hopi and "Sedna" among the Eskimos. A rich mythology is woven around each of these women. Some of them are associated with the earth, some with the sky, the ocean, plants or animals, but none, says Gill, has the function of an omnipotent Earth Goddess. Gill's critique of the scholars of the phenomenology of religions (like Eliade and Hultkrantz) concerns mainly their method of abstracting a general concept from its local contexts. It is true that these goddesses are so complex and full of rich nuances that it is possible to take some of their features and combine them into a belief in one all-embracing goddess, but that would be a secondary and late construction made by scholars or Native reformers. Other important aspects would then be neglected.

The encounter between the Europeans and the Native groups, on the other hand, played an important role in how the concept was to develop. Gill describes how the Natives themselves, by and by, made capital out of the Mother Earth concept, by using it in a creative way in their dialogue with White society. An important person in this matter was Charles A. Eastman, a Sioux Indian and a physician at Pine Ridge. In 1911 he wrote a book about Sioux religion to bring this knowledge further to a White audience. His contributions were important in making Mother Earth into a theological concept.[99] If Eastman in his use of the concept wanted to stress the similarities between the Western and the Indian culture, it was often used in the 1970s by Native groups as a marker of the difference between the two cultures.[100] The Native role as Mother Earth's protector is, for example, stressed by George Erasmus (National Chief, Assembly of First Nations) in his introduction to

[98] Hultkrantz 1967: 43.
[99] Gill 1987: 136.
[100] Gill (1987: 137) mentions as an example Grace Black Elk, grandchild of the famous Black Elk.

Drumbeat: "In this visionary Canada we would be free to express in our actions our tremendous concern for the environment, to undertake our traditional role as protectors of Mother Earth."[101]

Contemporary Natives are not naively unaware of the positive image ascribed to them by the environmental movement or by New Age groups. Geertz says in his work on Hopi prophecies that: "the Traditionalists were very much aware of ecological issues and specifically addressed not only the Ecology Movement but also the officials of government policy."[102] I would add to the list scholars as a further example of a group that Natives have addressed.[103]

"Traditional ecological knowledge"

Scholars today have further strengthened the image of the "ecological Indian" in their positive writings about premodern societies' way of viewing and treating nature. The environmental historian Donald Hughes writes that, when the Natives were initiated into theories of the ecosystem, they could immediately recognize this way of thinking from their own tradition: "Their philosophy was already ecological."[104] Hughes also draws parallels between the Natives' efforts to keep their population low, in order not to waste resources in an area, and the modern concept of "carrying capacity".[105] The symbiosis between science and traditional knowledge has created a new concept, "traditional ecological knowledge".

The concept of "traditional ecological knowledge" refers to how indigenous people have embedded ecological knowledge in folk models, a kind of ethnoecology. This "traditional ecological knowledge" can be found in *feng-shui*, the old, Chinese, nutritional therapy, or in the traditional Maya agriculture. In these cases, we find knowledge that corresponds to modern scientific

---

[101] Richardson (ed.) 1989: 2.

[102] Geertz 1992: 313. In a letter to President Richard Nixon, a traditionalist writes that the solutions to the environmental problems are embedded in Hopi prophecies. Geertz 1992: viii: "Cultural confrontation has led to a complicated symbiosis between the Traditionalists and various, Euro-American, ecological movements, new religious movements (such as New Age) and other special interest groups."

[103] Harvey Feit and Frank Speck are two of the scholars among the Algonkians who have been active in the Native struggles against the authorities. Cf. Krech 1999: 195pp.

[104] Hughes 1983/1996: 22.

[105] Hughes 1983/1996: 95.

observations.[106] Another example is to be found in the Australian Aranda myths that include "ecological" knowledge about the life of the kangaroos.[107]

Traditional ecological knowledge was also on the agenda at a conference at the University of Northern Arizona in August 1998. Many of the participants were Natives and one of the main speakers was Dennis Martinez, from the Indigenous Peoples' Restoration Network in Oregon. An important summary of his speech was published in the *Navajo Hopi Observer News* and on the Internet. [108] Martinez showed in his text that he was familiar with both modern discussions about the implications of Cartesian dualism and the concept of deconstruction: "Western science and the history of ideas since the 1600s emphasize objectivism and taking human interaction out of the picture. Indigenous people, on the other hand, emphasize the interaction of humans with the earth. The goal now may be a synthesis of Western and Native ideas ..."[109] In order to avoid Western science claiming superiority in the interpretations, Martinez refers to "postmodern theory": "There is a trend in Western thinking now (called deconstruction) that leads to understanding Native thought."[110]

The "trend" which Martinez refers to and which has its roots in a criticism of modernity may be illustrated by a model made by the environmental philosopher Charlene Spretnak. In her model, she distinguishes three different ways of viewing the world: the modern, the deconstructionist postmodern and the ecological postmodern. Here follow some examples from her model:

	Modern	*Deconstructionist Postmodern*	*Ecological Postmodern*
Metanarrative	Salvation, progress	None (They are all power plays)	The cosmological unfolding
Truth mode	Objectivism	Extreme relativism	Experientialism
World	A collection of objects	An aggregate of fragments	A community of of subjects
Reality	Fixed order	Social construction	Dynamic relationship

[106] Cf. Anderson (1996: 16). *Feng-shui* is an old Chinese way of planning and building without damaging the *ch'i* in the cosmos.
[107] Newsome 1980.
[108] http://www.navajohopiobserver.com/news3.htm. I am most grateful to my colleague Mikael Salomonsson, who gave me a copy of this Internet article.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Ibid.

Grounding	Mechanistic universe	None (total ground-lessness)	Cosmological processes
Nature	Nature as opponent	Nature as wronged object	Nature as a subject
Science	Reductionism	It's only a narrative!	Complexity
Sense of the divine	God the Father	"Gesturing toward the sublime"	Creativity in the cosmos, ultimate mystery[111]

The model may, of course, be criticized, but, as a model of the differences between what she calls the deconstructionist and the ecological postmodern, it is interesting, since it seems to me that it opens up two possible ways of understanding Martinez' statement that "deconstruction" could lead to an understanding of "Native thoughts". Both the postmodern ways that Spretnak mentions are critical of modernity (a concept that has often been analogously used as Western ideas[112]). But, while the deconstructive, postmodern way in her model only gives the alternative narratives possibilities of being told, these narratives become ideal prototypes in her ecological, postmodern model. Here, science and other cultures' cosmologies may meet and learn from one another. With this model as an example, the scholars' view of the traditional societies seems to have split into two parts. One view develops concepts such as "traditional ecological knowledge" and places "the little narratives" in relation to power and modern science to say that, although not scientific, these folk models may give ecological insights. Here the analysis stops. There are, however, reasons why we should be a little careful about the comparison between folk models and science. In spite of the premodern, hunter knowledge (that probably in many cases was *analogous* to some of today's ecological insights), it may still be misleading and anachronistic to call these insights ecological. Ecology is a discipline that belongs to modern science, and its epistemology is based on other premises than the cosmology of a premodern hunter. Furthermore, even if folk models yield important observations, they also carry assumptions with low credibility, according to Western hypotheses.

[111] Spretnak 1997: 73.

[112] See the criticism of this in Comaroff and Comaroff 1993: xi.

If the scholars want to have them correspond more closely to modern science, some parts in the models will have to be neglected.[113]

The second of the two postmodern models develops the concept of "traditional ecological knowledge" more into a "sacred ecology", in which the same narratives as in the first model are not only highly valued, but also have something to teach the modern West. These narratives become the modern equivalent of the critique of civilization, which the 19th century Romanticists worded sharply against contemporary society.

Sacred ecology

The concept of "sacred ecology" has been used by scholars in different ways to describe the traditional societies' way of viewing nature. Harrod chooses to anchor the concept in the premodern, Northern Plains Indian cosmology:

> Their relationship to animal beings was so informed by religious meanings that it constituted a sacred ecology that may not be completely recoverable, either by their successors or by the wider non-Indian population. The term 'sacred ecology' refers to the sensibility, evident in Northern Plains cultures, that the world was constituted by powers that took the form of Persons.[114]

Even if humanity cannot return to the life of premodern hunters, Harrod hopes that a "sacred ecology" may re-awaken peoples' earlier, more respectful way of treating animals and nature. The Indian way of viewing nature may thus be the portal that will admit modern man to a state of life in which humanity will live in harmony with nature.

Suzuki broadens the concept of "sacred ecology" and makes it valid for all traditional societies. For him, a "sacred ecology" stands for "this ancient, culturally diverse aboriginal consensus on the ecological order and the integrity of nature ..."[115] He uses examples from contemporary anthropological literature, in which the "Elders" bring forth the ancient traditions of their culture. Furthermore, he widens the concept of "Elders" to include even some Western scholars ("some of our wisest and most respected elder statesmen of

---

[113] Anderson (1996: 102) writes that the same Chinese medical system, which has contributed a lot of useful products to Western society, also states that the mud taken from a horse's footprint when the animal is heading towards the east prevents a sleeping man from rising, if it is rubbed on his navel.

[114] Harrod 2000: xiv.

[115] Suzuki & Knudtson 1992: 18.

science").[116] Suzuki lists a series of divergences between "Native Wisdom" and scientific knowledge, and he sees it as his mission to pick out themes, in which the two ways of thinking may come together and cross-fertilize each other:

> … a search for points of intellectual, emotional, and poetic resonance between some of the most profound truths of modern life sciences − particularly evolutionary biology, genetics, and ecology − and those of the time-tested nature-wisdom of First Peoples around the world.[117]

If the concept of sacred ecology is to be used in a productive way, it must, first of all, be contextualized both in time and in space. When Suzuki speaks about "Native wisdom", he uses it as an umbrella term for many different ethnic groups' ways of viewing knowledge. Here Suzuki differs from the scholars who examine "traditional ecological knowledge", in which each traditional group's cosmology is kept separate. Furthermore, Suzuki does not anchor the concept in time. He uses ethnographic texts to exemplify some themes (e.g. Mother Earth and "sacred time"), but when he classifies the different groups' statements as ancient, he makes them timeless.

"Sacred ecology" cannot cover both the premodern and the modern Mi'kmaqs' (or other groups of people's) ways of viewing nature. That would be the same as disengaging the Mi'kmaq from the historical processes and transforming them into the stereotype that scholars today are trying to avoid. The modern Mi'kmaq have been educated in a scientific tradition and they speak freely about *nature*, a word and a perspective on the world that was not found in the traditional hunter's lifeworld. They are also familiar with what is written about "Indians". I do not think that it was a coincidence that it was from a Mi'kmaq that I first got to know about and was lent Suzuki & Knudtson's *Wisdom of the Elders*. If the concept of "sacred ecology" were, on the other hand, used as a modern phenomenon, it would be more valid. The definition of the concept would then be as follows: modern Natives, familiar through education with ecology, formulate, along with their contemporary knowledge of their ancient tradition, a sacred ecology, in which science is

[116] Suzuki & Knudtson 1992: 21.
[117] Ibid.

woven together with ethics and spirituality.[118] There has always been a kind of unwillingness among the modern Native groups to reify the environment. In recent years, this has led to a pan-Indian ecology, in which spirituality and ethics are just as important components as scientific competence is. The following dialogue between a researcher (R) and a Mi'kmaq (MI) is an example of how the Mi'kmaq very consciously picks parts out of his tradition and puts them into a context in which contemporary environmental issues are being discussed:

> MI: I think we are just returning back to our old teachings in the last few years. We've lost practically everything that is identifiable as being a Native person, including the care and the love of Creation. That was lost through the non-use of the Mi'kmaq language. When you use English and you talk about the environment you sort of separate yourself as 'it' and 'me', when in our language it's 'us' and 'we'. It's the same thing. There's no differentiation between the environment and humanity.
> R: That's very interesting. Could you give me any examples?
> MI: All right. If I tell you, that tree over there, the hardwood tree? 'See how beautiful it is? Look at the leaves on it. Are they beautiful or what?' Now that's very uncomfortable for me to say in English. But if I really say it in Mi'kmaq and I translate it to what I'm saying in English: 'See that tree over there? Isn't she beautiful? Look at her leaves.' I would give it personality. I would give it a personal pronoun, I would recognize it by giving it a personal pronoun. And I indeed must respect it because there is no differentiation between her and I.
> R: Is this related to the Mi'kmaq concept of Nogamuk?
> MI: Nogamuk? Yes. We are all related ...When you use the Mi'kmaq language anyway, I've been speaking it all my life, the concepts of environment and conservation and all that stuff never were an issue until very recently. And once they became an issue they were easily found. I found them right away within the language.[119]

[118] It is not only in contemporary Native literature that we find ways of combining science and religion. As an example from another tradition, I may mention S. H. Nasr (1993), who sees a solution to the environmental crises in a Sacred Science, in which modern science will be embedded in the Islamic tradition.
[119] Dalby 1999: 13.

The contrast between Canadian society and the Mi'kmaq way of thinking is clearly articulated by this Mi'kmaq. Statements like these have made some scholars depict "American Indian spirituality" as a counter-movement among contemporary Natives towards the White society.[120] Leaders and sources of inspiration within this movement are both historical (Black Elk) and contemporary (Vine Deloria, Jr., and Oren Lyons). Even non-Natives have influenced the movement (e.g. Gary Snyder and Michael Harner). All of these spokesmen share some basic statements. The exploitation of nature by White men and racism are condemned. They are only two sides of the same coin: Western colonialism. Natives have treated their land as a sacred place, where people lived harmoniously with nature. The modern American culture may be saved with insights from the traditional Native way of viewing nature.[121] This modern, Native counter-movement differs from its predecessors of the 19th century (e.g. Wovoka and the Ghost Dance). Natives today are more "dual citizens" and they "preach the relevance of Indian spirituality for Western problems. While earlier prophets tried to revitalize the Indian cultures and save them from destruction or assimilation, their modern successors want to change the western culture."[122] One of the aims is, of course, to work against injustices from the White society, but it is just as important to increase the internal work between different Native groups. Many network groups have thus been built up during recent years to discuss environmental issues or to cooperate when there are environmental threats to the reserves. The First Nations Environmental Network (FNEN) and the Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN) are two examples of these groups which have been important for the Mi'kmaq.

The FNEN was formally organized in 1992 after some years of lobbying and was accepted as a part of the Canadian Environmental Network in 1995. It is a Canadian, national organization that wants to bring together indigenous groups at the grass-roots level, in order that they may support one another on environmental issues. It emphasizes three important components in its work: mind, body and spirit. An awareness ("mind") of the environment will grow by education; the grass-roots activism works via the body, and the spirit gives the work a deeper meaning. Ceremonies, spiritual gatherings and "healing circles" will thus strengthen the people in their struggle for the survival and

[120] Porterfield 1990: 152.
[121] Porterfield 1990: 154.
[122] Porterfield 1990: 162.

healing of Mother Earth. The spirituality is very important in the work and marks a clear difference from the engagements of the more secular, environmental groups. Ecological knowledge is important for the FNEN, but not sufficient: "First we are spirit, then we are human ..."[123] The FNEN has been engaged on many issues concerning Native groups, among others, the Battle of Kelly's Mountain.

The IEN was established in 1990 in the Navaho Nation, Arizona. It also emphasizes education for its members, in order to build up efficient strategies in their environmental work. But it also stresses traditional values and an ecological, healthy lifestyle. It works successfully in both Canada and the USA and cooperates with the FNEN. It clearly displays the difference between the Native American Movement and other environmental activists. The following reasons are given:

> First, there is a complete absence of the concept of 'wilderness' – or the idea of nature devoid of human beings. Instead, humans are presented as an integral part of different natural regions, acting within them to gather their sustenance. Second, the human race is not seen as the inherent collective enemy of ecosystems. Instead, the corporate and governmental forces that destroy the environment are clearly identified. Third, animals are never presented as cute or fuzzy, but as sacred parts of Native cultures, economic subsistence, and clan systems. Indeed, if any single-issue animal rights activists accidentally wandered into the Hunting, Fishing, and Gathering workshop, it would have sent chills up their spines. The right to gather the bounties of nature is put on the same level as the protection of the resources from corporate polluters.[124]

The proclamation shows that there has been, and still is, an inherent conflict between some environmental groups and Natives, e.g. between animal-rights activists and hunting cultures. The IEN has been in a dispute with Greenpeace (on whale-hunting and seal-hunting) and with the Sierra Club (about settlements in the Grand Canyon).

The members of the IEN envision increased possibilities of getting a better response to their work by the use of the network:

---

[123] http://www.fnen.org/

[124] http://conbio.rice.edu/nae/docs/grossman.html, p. 15.

> In much the same way that the Zapatistas mobilized international support through the Internet, Indigenous activists are now better able to build networks against specific companies or projects ... The London-based Peoples Against Rio Tinto Zinc and Subsidiaries (PARTiZANS) has linked Native peoples from Australia to Ontario in resistance to the world's largest mining firm. The time is not far off when a multinational activist network can successfully coordinate an international day or week of actions against a specific multinational corporation, such as Arco or Exxon.[125]

Private persons also frequently use the Internet to discuss environmental issues. The Mi'kmaq traditionalist Sulian Stone Eagle Herney, who held a leading position on the Kelly's Mountain issue, can thus be found on the Internet. Herney, today a member of the FNEN, has been interviewed, and the speech can be downloaded and listened to by the interested net-surfer. The speech, "Working Together as a Global People", encourages people to engage actively in protecting Mother Earth and says that environmental education should have a high priority on the reserves.[126]

Defender of Mother Earth

The Mi'kmaqs' environmental struggle can today be described as their contribution to a "sacred ecology", which unites them with other Native groups in North America. Mother Earth is for them, as for other Native groups, an often-used, key concept. "Mother" signalizes that nature is not a dead object, not dead matter, but is rather to be likened to a living organism, a subject.[127] The metaphor is also meant to evoke associations with the source of life, caring, loving and belonging. The concept may be used in sweet-grass, ceremonial prayers: "The prayer said during this process is: Creator, please cleanse me of my negativity and fill me with the positive energies of love, so that, as I am healed so may I work for the healing of our Earth Mother."[128] In an article from 1993, the concept of Mother Earth stands like a watershed between the Whites and the Mi'kmaq. The colonizers are accused of taking away from the Mi'kmaq their important connection with the land. This broken bond started the chain of misery on the reserves today:

---

[125] http://conbio.rice.edu/nae/docs/grossman.html, pp. 18.

[126] http://elements/nb.ca/mulitm/sulian/sulian.htm

[127] The metaphor for the earth as a living being has also been used by modern scientists, e.g. James Lovelock's way of talking about earth as Gaia, originally a Greek goddess.

[128] *MMNN*, October 1994, no. 10, p. 15.

> What makes these forces so greatly corrosive and tragic in their consequences lies in the fact that Native people maintain an innate personal relationship to the land that is more than physical in nature? It is indeed a biological union as if each is tethered on an umbilical cord to Mother Earth and a oneness with nature. The Indian has been forcefully denied and dispossessed of this close bond, and a vast gulf of alienation and remoteness has come about which manifests itself in acts of violence, despair, civil disobedience and/or self destruction.[129]

Another Mi'kmaq stresses how important it is to keep his identity as a Native. If he loses this special identity, it disturbs his relationship to nature: "Ecologists work on preserving trees. They do not know that a tree will survive as long as a Native is standing beside it. But this person is still no guarantee. It is also demanded that this person should not have lost his identity."[130] The same Mi'kmaq says that it is from Mother Earth that he gets his strength in hard moments: "When you are forcing us down on our knees and making us pray, we will gain strength from Mother Earth and grow stronger."[131]

The Mi'kmaqs' growing environmental engagement in the 1990s brought them invitations to events in Canadian society. In September 1991, they were, for the first time, invited to Sydney (Cape Breton) to participate in Earth Day.[132] On Treaty Day, a few weeks later, the Grand Captain criticized the Europeans about their way of treating the environment during the centuries. He saw a solution in the knowledge that the Mi'kmaq possess: "The global aboriginal community possesses the knowledge of global preservation and the elimination of environmental destruction ... Mi'kmaq knew how to live without making permanent changes to the landscape".[133] The same speaker was also interviewed in a video recording about sustainable development. This video, *Struggling for Sustainable Development*, was produced in 1992 by A Folkus Atlantic Production. Its aim was to discuss the concept of sustainable development with a focus on the Bras d'Or Lake. Besides the Mi'kmaq, there

---

[129] *MMNN*, March 1993, no. 3, p. 8.

[130] *Fjärde Världen*, 1995, no. 1, p. 11, my translation. Original Swedish text: "Ekologer arbetar med att bevara träden. De vet inte att trädet klarar sig om det finns en person från ett ursprungsfolk bredvid det. Men denna person är ändå ingen garanti. Därför att det krävs att den personen inte har förlorat sin identitet."

[131] *Fjärde Världen*, 1995, no. 1, p. 13, my translation. Original Swedish text: "När ni tvingar oss ned på knä och tvingar oss att be får vi styrka från Moder Jord och blir starkare."

[132] *MN*, 26 April 1991, p. 4.

[133] *MN*, October 1991, no. 26, p. 8.

were representatives of the University College of Cape Breton, environmental action groups and people from different business enterprises. The introductory voice is that of a Mi'kmaq, who represents his people's way of viewing nature: "A person should take only what they need. It's what we were taught by the Elders. To respect the land and to treat a land as if it is a person or a living thing." In the introduction, the producer, Joan Weeks, chooses to display the Mi'kmaq as *powwow*-dancing Indians and says that they are spokesmen for an ancient, traditional wisdom: "Respect the land is a concept that's been part of the Native Culture since time immemorial, but suddenly it has been discovered by the White man who calls it sustainable development."[134] The different messages in the video may, in the end, be broken down into a conflict between two things: the people's right to the land and to live in a healthy environment versus the capitalist's interest in making a profit at the cost of the environment. The Mi'kmaq are, as residents on the small reserves around Bras d'Or Lake, in the same situation as their White neighbors. They are all worried about chemical waste and environmental disasters. A Mi'kmaq couple emphasize the beauty of the landscape ("it is gorgeous"), the importance of diminishing the chemical effluent in the area and the hope that their children may be able to swim in clean water also in the future. But they do not appear only as spokesmen for the local "little" man who worries about the environment. They also reinforce their arguments by saying that people must "respect the land" and that the Mi'kmaq traditional knowledge could be the salvation of nature and thereby the White society: "Teach them the traditional knowledge because I think that's the only thing that can save the world now."[135] To further stress the seriousness of this case, the Mi'kmaq turned to the UN to get the area protected. They did not trust the Canadian Government to deal with the environmental problems that threaten the Bras d'Or Lake, but asked the UN to adopt a Mi'kmaq "protectional management program". They hoped that this program would be the Mi'kmaqs' contribution to the proclaimed Year for the Worlds Indigenous People (1993).

Not only the way the media choose to present the Mi'kmaq, but also the scholars' interest in traditional societies' ways of viewing nature are familiar to the Mi'kmaq. This interest sometimes goes together with the more romantic images and strengthens the Mi'kmaqs' identity as spokesmen for saving the earth. The Mi'kmaqs' engagement in the Kelly's Mountain affair led

[134] The quote is from the video *Struggling for Sustainable Development* (1992).
[135] Ibid.

Professor Alistair McIntosh, of the Centre for Human Ecology at Edinburgh University, to invite one of the leaders of the Mi'kmaq Warriors to Scotland in 1994. McIntosh asked the Warrior to help him to prevent the opening of a planned quarry, Lingerbay superquarry, on Harris. His hope was that the Mi'kmaq Warrior "will be able to give the planning inquiry a spiritual insight lost to many in the modern Era."[136] McIntosh invoked two main arguments against the superquarry. He partly feared that large-scale mining would cause environmental problems, and he partly referred to his Christian faith and said that the mining project was against God's presence in creation. The Mi'kmaq spokesman submitted a protest letter, together with McIntosh and his colleague Professor Donald Macleod,[137] in which he emphasized the Mi'kmaqs' mission as the defenders of Mother Earth:

> Our philosophy and spirituality has always been one where man was not dominant over the creation of other life forms, which we shared this territory with. It was always our belief and still is our belief that the Creator had placed the Mi'kmaq people as caretakers of Mother Earth.[138]

But McIntosh's radical engagement in environmental issues soon led to devastating consequences for him and his department. The *Sunday Times* commented on the Mi'kmaq visit in March 1996 like this: "Last year a lecturer *even* [italics added] brought over a Red Indian chief as part of a protest against plans for a superquarry on Harris."[139] In April, the Vice-Chancellor of the University decided to close down the Department for Human Ecology and fired McIntosh: "It may have been when a Native Chief ... was brought across the Atlantic to save the Scottish island of Harris that Edinburgh University decided its most radical department had to go."[140]

The interest of scholars, the rhetoric of environmental activists and the images in the media about wise Indians protecting Mother Earth only strengthened the Mi'kmaq in their struggle and brought one of their Warriors across the Atlantic Ocean. All these events and information were skillfully put

---

[136] The *Stornoway Gazette and West Coast Advertizer*, 3 November 1994, p. 12.

[137] Macleod was at this time Professor of Systematic Theology at the Free Church College in Edinburgh and spokesman for a "Green theology". "Green theology" emphasizes that humans as God's stewards on earth have a special responsibility to take care of the creation.

[138] The *Stornoway Gazette and West Coast Advertizer*, 3 November 1994, p. 12.

[139] The *Sunday Times*, 31 March 1996.

[140] The *Independent*, 28 April 1996, p. 6.

together by the Mi'kmaq in their struggle for Kelly's Mountain. The following quotes show how well the Mi'kmaq knew how to play the game. The Mi'kmaq defendant of the mountain here starts by stressing that mining is an example of the White man's ruthless exploitation of nature. The Native's relation to Mother Earth stands as a counterpart to the colonizer's way of treating nature. Once again the traditionalist takes the opportunity to stress how the traditional life of his people implies a life in harmony with nature:

> I've been invited to many areas to look at environmental disasters ... (I think I won't use the word 'environment') ... the assault that's been occurring to Mother Earth. I'm going to use terminology that pertains to us First Nation people and the relationship we have with Mother Earth ... We don't live *on* it like a parasite; we live *with* it. And unfortunately the arrival of the Europeans, where ... I hate to compare you with parasites, but apparently this is the effect you've had on Mother Earth in your five hundred years of arrival ...[141]

The same traditionalist then continues to carefully point out the distinctiveness of his people compared with conventional environmental groups:

> We're being dragged in by many environmental groups to help us, help us ... But my priorities are with this mountain. I'm not an environmentalist, they give me all kinds of names, I don't know what half of them are, but some are impressive as hell ...[142]

The traditionalist is aware that his mission as a protector of Mother Earth fits well into the environmental debate. It is more "natural" for an "Indian" than for a White environmentalist to speak about "Mother Earth". But rather than feeling put down, the interviewed traditionalist anticipates this and takes the opportunity to use his image as a model for the original "ecological guru" and by this further strengthens his struggle to preserve the mountain:

> ... sure, I am being used by the SKMS[143], but I don't mind as long as they are supplying me with material. When the mountain is

[141] Tape recording (Alf Hornborg 1994: 251-252).
[142] Tape recording (Alf Hornborg 1994: 252).
[143] SKMS – the Save Kelly's Mountain Society.

> saved, N.N. will probably never again have tea with me. I don't mind being their Indian ... as long as it saves the mountain.[144]

Not all the Mi'kmaq stood on the barricades and spoke about how to preserve the mountain. The above-quoted traditionalist is a very skillful speaker and used to talking in public, at meetings with authorities and in the media. In those meetings, he also encounters other environmentalists, e.g. radical bio-centrics and Greenpeace. He is aware of the images projected onto the "Indian" and knows how to use concepts like Mother Earth to his own advantage. But Mother Earth as a concept is a bit more complicated than just an "Indian" feature. It is important to be aware in what contexts it is used. It is not certain that the same speaker would use this concept on the reserve, since it often fulfills a more important function in official contexts than in the local everyday life. During my time with the Mi'kmaq, I met several of them who spent their time hunting and fishing, but they never spoke about Mother Earth. I felt that it was just as strange for me to ask these Mi'kmaq about their relation to Mother Earth as to put the same question to a small-scale farmer in Sweden. For them, "Mother Earth" was the daily world they inhabited, named places with memories attached to them and meanings for the initiated, i.e. places that were impossible to incorporate into the more abstract Mother Earth.[145] This experience-near place relation should not be conflated with the *abstract* concept of Mother Earth that is often used by Mi'kmaq spokesmen when they argue with Canadian society about the importance of preserving nature. The conflation between a person's relation to a specific place and the traditionalists' use of the Mother Earth concept may be one explanation of why Indians (in this case, the Mi'kmaq) have often been depicted as worshippers of Mother Earth. Since there has also been a tendency to look upon traditional societies as homogeneous groups, a traditionalist's statement in a specific context is interpreted as the hallmark of a general Mi'kmaq belief.

Kelly's or Kluskap's Mountain?

The authorities had a hard time in handling the Mi'kmaqs' argument that the mountain was sacred. At an official meeting in 1992, one of the Mi'kmaq traditionalists emphasized sacredness as the main argument like this:

---

[144] Tape recording (Alf Hornborg 1994: 253).
[145] Relph 1976: 47.

> The mountain is a living shrine to our people ... (it) represents to us the most sacred site in the entire world, for those who still follow the faith. I'm not a Catholic, I am a follower of my grandfather's belief ... I know N.N. and Kelly Rock Company's sole purpose is not to go there to destroy it, but I also know that the effects of him establishing such a quarry there will destroy the cave, will destroy the mountain, will destroy any sacredness that may go back thousands and thousands and thousands of years ...[146]

At another meeting in Eskasoni in 1992, the sacredness of the place was further stressed: "It's one of the most sacred sites among our traditional brothers ... we are growing numbers...growing stronger and stronger ... This cave represents to us the home of our prophet."[147] The speaker alludes to the historical conflict between the colonizers and the Mi'kmaq when he says that nearly everything has been taken away from the Mi'kmaq. He therefore asks the mining company to leave the mountain in peace: "It hasn't done nobody harm ... the prophecy states that one day the prophet will return to deliver us ... Let us at least keep the cave, *if nothing else*" [italics added]. When he stresses that the mountain is sacred and that Kluskap will one day return, he also says that the Mi'kmaq have their traditions and that these traditions have constantly been threatened by the Europeans. Wayne Grady, a journalist, takes as his starting-point how a place might have different meanings for different persons and gives four different perspectives in which Kelly's Mountain is viewed:

> To the Nova Scotia Micmacs, it is known as *Nukmij'nawe'nuk*, 'Place of my Grandmother,' the cave of Glooscap's prophesied return and the most sacred of the Micmac Nation's seven sacred sites in eastern Canada. To local fishermen and tourist operators, it is Kelly's Mountain, one of the scenic splendours of Cape Breton Island, where it rises from a peninsula on St. Ann's Bay at the eastern mouth of the Bras d'Or lakes. To naturalist and wildlife-conservation groups, it is within rock-throwing distance of the province's famous puffin colony on Bird Island and home of up to 10 mating pairs of bald eagles. To Kelly Rock Limited, the Canadian-owned company that plans to strip-mine the mountain, it is

[146] Tape recording (Alf Hornborg 1994: 252)
[147] Video recording at Eskasoni in 1992.

> two billion tons of granite that could earn share-holders $ 10 million a year for the next 100 years.[148]

Grady's sympathies should not be mistaken. He uses three different noble reasons for keeping the mountain intact and these reasons are put antithetically up against capitalistic plundering. It is sacredness versus hunger for money. The Mi'kmaq now had two roads to follow. One was to use the democratic methods to save the mountain, the other was to use violence. Their choice was dependent on how the authorities responded to their demands. The Mi'kmaq first tried to use the peaceful methods that were available to protect the mountain. A spokesman for the Sacred Mountain Society thus turned to the Human Rights Commission in December 1992 for help on the Kelly's Mountain issue. David Beaton, of the Human Rights Commission, let his secretary answer on the 29th of December that he was not responsible in this matter and referred to the Department of Culture (Nova Scotia Museum).[149] The answer was dated 7th January 1993:

> Your letter ... concerning Kluscap's Cave has been passed on to us because of our responsibility for the Special Places Protection Act.
>
> The Nova Scotia Museum was involved in investigations of this site in 1989. It was examined by an archaeologist, a geologist and an ethnologist. They could find only evidence of recent activity (i.e. twentieth century) and inscriptions which are not Micmac petroglyphs. However, the cave's special significance to the Micmac people has been well documented. Also, as you may know, the quarry project's environmental assessment is under federal/provincial review, and concerns about the quarry's impact on the cave have been recorded.
>
> Since the cave is not an archaeological site, it does not fit within the usual interpretation of the Special Places Protection Act.[150]

---

[148] *Harrowsmith*, Jan./Feb 1991.

[149] My husband and I got this correspondence from Sulian Stone Eagle Herney, one of the leaders of the Sacred Mountain Society.

[150] Letters to Sulian Stone Eagle Herney from the Nova Scotia Department of Education, Nova Scotia Museum.

The failure to get the authorities to protect the mountain forced the Mi'kmaq to mark very clearly how important the mountain was to them. Each refusal became a further disappointment for them, but it also confirmed what they had expected. Canadian society was not willing to meet their requests. For a Cape Bretoner, Kelly's Mountain was a beautiful place and the sight of it gave a special feeling of being at home. But it still remained a mountain. For a growing number of the Mi'kmaq it was Kluskap's Mountain and, as such, a symbol of spiritual values and a hope, but also another connection with a world of unemployment, high rates of suicide among the young, poverty and drug abuse, which in turn led to diseases, depressions, divorces and different kinds of family abuse.[151] If the mountain was threatened, so were the Mi'kmaq. A traditionalist warned of the consequences, if the plans for a quarry were realized:

> ... People of the faith that I follow have pledged themselves at the cave to die before they will see a quarry there. And if a person is willing to die, let me tell you a person is willing to kill ... Anything happens to the Bras d'Or Lakes, happens to us. It'll destroy our way of life. We are just now gaining a foothold against our social problems, our addiction problems, our economic problems ... We are just recently now starting to wear our hair in braids again, taking up the drum again, given back the identity to our people, the pride of our people ... I am one who pledges to die at the mountain, and believe me I will, and I can kill, and it's as simple as that ...[152]

A sacred place

New possibilities have been opened up today for a collaboration between anthropologists, archaeologists and indigenous peoples. Scholars mix their books or articles with contributions from indigenous peoples, as in *Sacred Sites, Sacred Places*. This publication is included in the series entitled *One World Archaeology* (OWA) with papers from 1990, the year of the Second World Archaeological Congress (WAC 2). The WAC saw it as an important task to invite representatives from the "Fourth World" to take part in the academic dialogue.[153] The aim of the Congress was to increase understanding

[151] *MMNN*, 1994, no. 5, p. 17.
[152] Alf Hornborg 1994: 252.
[153] Carmichael (ed.) 1994: xiv.

between scientists, indigenous people and representatives of the relevant societies, so that sacred places all around the world could be better protected from different forms of exploitation.

A problem in the discussions of sacred places was the concept of the Holy.[154] When a concept is defined, it is always limited by the one who defines it and at the farthest point by a specific culture. The early 17th century missionaries had already described what they saw as the main difference between the Mi'kmaq culture and their own culture. Biard writes that "these Savages have no formulated Religion, government, towns, nor trades, so the words and proper phrases for all those things are lacking; *Holy* [italics added], Blessed, Angel, Grace ..."[155] According to Jane Hupert, one of the speakers at WAC 2, holy implies for a Christian an activity that goes together with a demarcated, religious life, while for others it may stand for an aspect or a dimension of reality, depicted in all possible, everyday contexts.[156] A holy place is for the Christian a place that differs from the profane places. But applied to the North American Indians' traditional way of viewing places, the concept of holy might, says Hubert, from one angle include the whole country.[157] In the chapter entitled "Wintu sacred geography of northern California",[158] an anthropologist (Dorothea Theodoratus) and a man from the Wintu tribe (Frank La Pena) collaborate to bridge over the problems which arise when different cultures use the same terms but attach different meanings to them. Their purpose is to transfer Wintu beliefs into concepts that are both understandable and useful to those authorities whose task is to formulate strategies for protecting places: "Federal land management policies and their burdensome, often ethnocentric interpretations sometimes serve to polarize the assessment of Indian claims as unusual and illogical."[159] Holiness has thus been a complicated concept to use in an Amerindian context. A central idea in the Amerindian cosmology is that the world is empowered. But power is at the same time also concentrated in some specific places that may give people health and happiness. These places may, among the Wintu, be mountains,

---

[154] Hubert 1994: 10.

[155] Biard 1616/1959: 195.

[156] Hubert 1994: 13. The concept of the Holy has been abundantly discussed through time. A classical study is Rudolf Otto's *Das Heilige* (1917). Another classical study is Mircea Eliade's *The Sacred and the Profane* (1957/1987: 10), in which he defines the sacred as the opposite of the profane: "Man becomes aware of the sacred because it manifests itself, shows itself, as something wholly different from the profane" (p. 11).

[157] Hubert 1994: 16.

[158] Carmichael 1994: 20pp.

[159] Theodoratus & LaPena 1994: 21.

rocks, caves or water-holes. The historical Mi'kmaq texts also tell us about such places. In the 17th century, Denys writes about an island in the Bay of Lunenburg, a place that the Mi'kmaq avoided. Another place was a whirlpool at the mouth of the St. John River:

> ... in the pitch of the falls is a great hollow, of about three or four hundred feet around; this is made by the rush of water as it passes between two rocks which form a narrow place in the river, an arrangement rendering it more swift at this spot. In this hollow is a great upright tree which floats, but no matter how the water runs it never gets out; it only makes its appearance from time to time, and sometimes is not seen for eight, ten or fifteen days. The end which appears above the water is a little larger around than a hogshead, and when it appears it is sometimes on one side and sometimes on the other. All of the Indians who passed by there in former times, and they are in great number in these parts, rendered it homage, but they give it little at present, having been undeceived. They call this tree the Manitou, that is to say the Devil. The homage which they formerly rendered it consisted of one or two beaver skins, or other peltry, which they attached to the top of the tree with an arrow head made of a moose bone sharpened with stones. When they passed this spot and their Manitou did not appear, they took it for a bad omen, saying that he was angry with them. Since the French have come to these parts, and they have been given arrowheads of iron, they no longer use any others, and the poor Manitou has his head so covered with them that scarcely could one stick a pin therein.[160]

Archaeologists of today have a hard time finding these important places in other cultures, because they are not clearly marked like a church or a temple. Objects that for the Western archaeologist are only stone formations in the sea, may for the local individual inhabit a whole world: "I can't begin to tell you about the heritage sites you've missed. I can show you a place where Xa:ls transformed a man, woman, girl, boy, and dog into stone right close to Siwash Creek."[161] The Federal Task Force on Comprehensive Claims thus recommended changes in government policy in 1985 to help the Canadian Natives more in their protection of their important places. But it takes time to handle these matters. In some cases, it has been better for the Natives to con-

[160] The quote is from Hoffman 1946: 426-427.

[161] Mohs 1994: 193. The quote is from Sto:lo (British Columbia). Xa:ls is a Sto:lo counterpart to Kluskap, a culture hero/trickster who transformed the landscape into its present appearance.

front the authorities directly than wait for a decision that could protect the places.[162]

The Mi'kmaqs' main argument against the exploitation of Kelly's Mountain was that the mountain concealed a cave, which was more than a result of water erosion. It was, above all, Kluskap's sacred abode and the place for his predicted return. They saw the quarry plans as an insult to the Mi'kmaq people and emphasized that their cave had always been the most sacred place in the world:

> The site has been a place of worship and it is believed the prophet will return to the mountain to deliver believers. Mr. Herney compared it to the Second Coming of Christ taught in the Catholic Faith.[163]

The Mi'kmaq spokesman knew that they had to negotiate with Canadian society about what should be defined as holy. Spokesmen for the Mi'kmaq claimed that, just as Jews, Christians and Muslims have their traditional holy places, the Mi'kmaq also have such places. If the West did not accept the Mi'kmaq view that Kluskap's Cave was a sacred place, they lacked respect for the Mi'kmaq religion and traditions and displayed an unwillingness to look upon them as equal to the Christian tradition. Thus, this spokesman for the SMS[164] compared Kluskap's Mountain with other sacred sites:

> [L]ike any other spiritual beliefs we have certain sites that are more important than life itself ... the degree of offense would be equal to that felt by Christians if a super quarry were placed at the Holy Sepulcher, or by the Hebrews if the wailing wall were removed for a motel, or by Muslims if a casino were placed in Mecca.[165]

The cave was also likened to a church: "It's hard to explain. How would you feel if someone was going to destroy your church and all your sacred gods in

---

[162] Mohs 1994: 205. Mohs mentions the Haida conflict with the lumber industry in Western Canada in 1988/9 and the Mohawks' battle against a planned golf course in 1990 (Oka).

[163] *MMNN*, December 1992, no. 12, p. 10.

[164] SMS, the Sacred Mountain Society.

[165] Information which the Sacred Mountain Society spread and which they have written down from different meetings, papers and interviews on the radio since "No brochures or printed details about the project have been made available although such have been promised."

it?"[166] Another traditionalist took the opportunity to explain that many Mi'kmaq are also Catholics and that has had a negative influence on the Kluskap tradition:

> We are mostly Catholic and because we worship the prophet Jesus we don't pay too much attention to our prophet, Kluscap. And it suffers. And that is why there hasn't been a great outcry from the Native population about what is about to happen, the destruction of the most Sacred site in the world. Mind you if it was one of the cathedrals in Rome or the birth place of Jesus, they would be armed with picks and brooms.[167]

The critique against Canadian society is also directed at the name of the mountain. When the English named it after a local moonshiner, this made Kluskap's connection with the mountain invisible and thereby concealed the Mi'kmaq traditions:

> Kelly's Mountain is a sacred mountain that was named according to the mentality of the oppression. Kelly was a non-native smuggler of moonshine who lived on this mountain just as a highway was built past it. And Kelly was a hard man to catch, so they named the mountain after him. What reaction would I get if I went to the mountain where Jesus was crucified and named it after a local drug dealer? If I went to the place where Jesus was born and gathered stones to sell to foreign companies, so I would become a millionaire at the cost of the Christian faith, what reaction would I then be met by? That would be sacrilege. Death would be a mild penalty for me.[168]

Some critical voices said that the talk about the cave as sacred was staged only by the Mi'kmaq to challenge Canadian society. Hubert says that some of

---

[166] The *Chronicle-Herald*, 21 April 1990, p. B: 3.

[167] *Network News. Nova Scotia Environmental Network*, July/August 1992, no. 2, p. 5.

[168] *Fjärde Världen*, 1995, no 1, p. 13, my translation. Original Swedish text: "Kelly's Mountain är ett heligt berg som uppkallades enligt förtryckets mentalitet. Kelly var en icke-indiansk spritsmugglare som bodde på det här berget just när en motorväg byggdes förbi berget. Och Kelly var en svårfångad man, så man döpte berget efter honom. Vilken reaktion skulle jag mötas av om jag gick till berget där Jesus korsfästes och döpte det efter en lokal knarklangare? Om jag gick till den plats där Jesus föddes och samlade ihop småsten där för att sälja till utländska företag, så att jag skulle bli miljonär på bekostnad av de kristnas tro, vilken reaktion skulle jag då mötas av? Det skulle vara ett helgerån. Döden skulle vara ett för milt straff för mig.

the urbanized groups, who have lost their ancient traditions, have deliberately used the word "sacred" so that they might fight powerfully those who want to destroy the land. [169] But she carefully adds that among the majority there is no wish to manipulate a concept, only a wish to preserve the land. A Mi'kmaq traditionalist firmly denies that talk about the cave as sacred is just a contemporary feature that has been created to be used as a cogent argument against an exploitation of the area. The cave has never been forgotten, says he, and it is still a living tradition in Mi'kmaq beliefs:

> Glooscap Mountain 'Kelly's Mountain' is in Cape Breton and is said to be the home of Glooscap the prophet of the Micmac Nation. The site of the cove [*sic*] has always been known and has never been forgotten. Our people have always kept in their hearts and minds the importance of the cave.[170]

It is hard for an outsider to decide what is a conscious or an unconscious manipulation in a conflict situation. If a place is to be exploited, a negotiation must take place between the exploiters and the defenders of the place. There is always a manipulation of the meaning's of words in a confrontation situation. The first action in deciding whether a mountain is sacred or not should then be to gain the power of defining the concept. What is defined as holy or sacred? Who should make the definition − the colonial power, the objective (?) scientist or the indigenous group affected by the matter? And there are differences from the older stories. The emphasis on one sacred mountain differs from that in the older stories. In the traditional stories, there are many spectacular and powerful places in the landscape that were connected sometimes with Kluskap and sometimes with his friends. It is documented in the ethnographic literature that there were certain Kluskap beliefs connected with the cave on Kelly's Mountain.[171] But the Mi'kmaq spokesmen detached Kluskap's Cave from this local tradition and brought it up to a more abstract level in their negotiations with the authorities. The debate focused on this mountain as specifically holy or sacred and thus important to the Mi'kmaq. The emphasis in the Mi'kmaq tradition could be discussed as the voice of the marginalized who wanted to keep their traditions, surrounded by a society with Christian traditions. But the issue is more complex than the Mi'kmaq

[169] Hubert 1994: 17pp.
[170] *MMNN*, February 1992, no. 2, p. 26.
[171] Speck 1915: 59, Parsons 1925: 87; cf. Davis 1992: 43.

tradition versus the colonizer's Christian beliefs. Many Mi'kmaq are today Catholics and familiar with Christian tradition. For many Mi'kmaq, the comparison between their and the Christian's holy places was a way of saying that their traditions were on an equal basis with the colonialists'. But this equalization had political consequences and must therefore be an object of negotiation. Since the concept of holy places in the negotiations received its definition from a Christian tradition, and not from the traditional, Mi'kmaq-hunter belief, there was an imbalance in the comparison. This imbalance was probably more of a problem for the scholar than for the Mi'kmaq. For the Mi'kmaq, it was more important to emphasize that they also had a tradition, and they did not make a scholarly distinction between "holy" as a Christian, theological concept and the power – *buoin* – in the traditional hunter cosmology.

Kluskap: a beaver hunter, a fairy-tale figure, or Mother Earth's defender? Texts and counter-texts

Kluskap had many functions in the 19th century stories. He transformed the landscape during his beaver-hunting expeditions, he saved hungry Mi'kmaq, he fought against the colonizers and he changed some fortunate Mi'kmaq into *migamawesu*. In some of the stories he left his people with a promise of a return. This time, the Mi'kmaq would be released from all the suffering they had had to endure. It is the more general prophecy that modern traditionalists discuss on the Kelly's Mountain issue, not the more locally embedded motifs. Kluskap as a savior and prophet is superior to Kluskap as a transformer of the landscape. He fits better into a modern story as Mother Earth's defender than as a beaver-hunter.

It was important for the Mi'kmaq traditionalists to give Kluskap the same status as Christ has in the Christian tradition. To depict Kluskap as just a figure in a fairy tale is, according to one Mi'kmaq traditionalist, only a way of continuing the colonial, ethnocentric oppression: "For you see Glooscap was not a bed time story to tell our children but he [*sic*] some of the creator. Glooscap was and still is a prophecy of our people".[172] The Mi'kmaq of today are familiar with how Kluskap has been depicted in the White authors' texts. They know the scholars' works, as well as the books and television series by Kay Hill. Older texts (Speck, Parsons, Rand, Leland) may be used on the

[172] *MMNN*, February 1992, no. 2, p. 26. Cf. Martin (1999: 155), who says that there is a tendency for modern readers to depict the Yupik stories as a kind of childish entertainment, as if they had nothing to say about real life: "[T]he majority of us regard the native stories as mere juvenile entertainment. We, in our ontology, see no familiar or verifiable reality in these stories."

Kelly's Mountain issue, but now the concepts or texts are somewhat modified and expressed in a counter-language. One Mi'kmaq says that it is one thing for the anthropologists look for facts about the Mi'kmaq, but how they interpret the facts is a product of their imagination:

> According to legend, Kelly's Mountain is the final resting place for Glooscap − *who anthropologists call a mythological Micmac hero* [italics added]. It is prophecized that Kelly's Mountain is where Glooscap left the Micmac people, it is there he would return.[173]

It is noticeable that the Mi'kmaq spokesman says that it is the anthropologist who interprets Kluskap as a "mythological Mi'kmaq hero". This implies that there are other ways of talking about Kluskap. When Bock, back in the 1960s, was worried about future studies of Mi'kmaq traditions, it was because he feared that, by reading books and watching television, the Mi'kmaq would be influenced by Canadian society's Kluskap stories. Thirty years later, we can read that the Mi'kmaq have their own opinions about how the stories by White authors like Kay Hill should be read. It should also be said that Hill's stories were originally produced as children's stories. She thus radically changed Rand's and Leland's original versions, since some of the parts might otherwise have been frightening. The final synopsis was arranged like fairy tales. Hill's (and other White authors') books were now and then referred to in the debate about Kelly's Mountain, often with a polemic undertone. The Mi'kmaq know the stories but stress the fact that they are a product of a White author's fantasy and should not be conflated with Mi'kmaq traditions:

> But Kluscap, there are several people who have done books, Kay Hill, an author from Halifax, *Legends of Kluscap*. In the Native community we weren't over excited about her interpretations of our stories. They do not run parallel to what I was taught. I get my teachings from my elders.[174]

One Mi'kmaq traditionalist made references to Hill's stories during a very tense meeting with the authorities and environmental activists on the Eskasoni reserve, in March 1992. He pointed to the fact that the cave was the home of the Mi'kmaq prophet and that Hill had portrayed Kluskap "as a legend, a fairy

---

[173] *MN*, 19 April 1991, p. 3.

[174] *Network News. Nova Scotia Environmental Network*, July/August 1992, no. 2, p. 4.

tale, a bed-time story and yet you confront a traditional person." The difference between a fairy tale and the Mi'kmaq tradition is for this traditionalist an important difference between playful fantasy and real life. To conflate these concepts might have the most disastrous consequences:

> You are talking about a prophet
> and a prophecy
> and there is [*sic*] two things you do not (begrudge?) a man:
> You do not get in the middle of a husband and his wife fighting
> and you do not get in between a man and his god
> you will die, or you will kill ...

But the Mi'kmaq could also allude or refer to the older, written texts and scholars' work. It is obvious that the poet Rita Joe must have known Parsons' text about Kluskap's Cave, when she wrote her poem *The Legend of Glooscap's Door*:

Rita Joe's poem:	*Parsons' text (1925):*
There is a doorway to Glooscap's domain Where you throw dry punk and fish For his fire and food But you must not enter Though you may leave a gift on stone Waiting to feel goodness. This is the way the legend goes So the Micmac elders say.	Gluskap's door is at St. Ann's. There you would throw in some dry punk and a little fish for his fire and food. You say, 'I wish you give me good luck.'
At Cape North on a mountain you whisper, 'My grandfather I have just come to your door I need your help.' Then you leave something you treasure Taking three stones.	'When you go to see Gluskap, at Smoket', Cape North, you say, 'My dear Grandfather, I just come on your door. I want you to help me.' You leave money inside door, pieces of silver.

[175] Joe 1988/1991: 40.

This is your luck. This is the way the legend goes. So the Micmac elders say.	You take two or three stones away with you, that's your luck.'
At Cape Dolphin near Big Bras d'Or There is a hole through the cliff It is Glooscap's door. And on the outside a flat stone It is his table. The Indians on a hunt leave on table Tobacco and eels. This brings them luck, so the story goes The legend lives on.[175]	At Cape Dolphin [Dauphin], Big Bras d'Or, there is a door through the cliff, Gluskap's door. Outside, there is a stone like a table. Indians going hunting will leave on it tobacco and eels, to give them good luck. They do this today.[176]

Rita Joe wrote her poem just before the quarry plan was announced[177] and over the years she had gained a friend in the ethnographer, Ruth Whitehead. Whitehead was one of the scholars who examined the historical-ethnographic details concerning Kelly's Mountain.[178] The scholars were asked by the Grand Chief Donald Marshall to look for Mi'kmaq petroglyphs inside the cave, but they found that the ceiling had collapsed 12 years ago. The only figures they found were graffiti left by a Canadian military group on an exercise in 1921.[179] In an article, Whitehead comments on the examination and mentions that Cape Breton had traditionally played an important role in the Kluskap tradition. From this island, one of three "doors" went to Kluskap's new home. The first "door" was at Smokey, Cape North, and the other at St. Ann's. The third door was very important and could be found at Cape Dolphin. Here two important rocks stood right outside the entrance to a cave. One rock was

---

[176] Parsons 1925: 87.

[177] The book was published in 1988, and the plans for a quarry were announced in 1989.

[178] The examination was made in October 1989 (Davis & Preston 1993: 87pp, cf. the booklet *The battle of Kelly's Mountain*, edited by the Save Kelly's Mountain Society). This brochure has an article from *The Cape Breton Magazine*, Jan. 1990, no. 53. Ruth Whitehead was one of the "Museum staff", and she told me that she had to swim out in the water to be able to get to Kluskap's Table (personal communication from Ruth Whitehead, 2000).

[179] The result of the investigation of the Fairy Hole Cave (Kluskap's Cave) is summarized in a Curatorial Report by the Nova Scotia Museum (Davis & Preston 1993: 89-90): "The investigations of Fairy Hole Cave by the Nova Scotia Museum and Davis Archaeological Consultants did not produce any evidence for significant cultural resources." Also personal communication from Ruth Whitehead (2000).

Kluskap's Table and the other the Mother-in-Law (or the Grandmother). The cave was called Kluskap's Cave, Kluskap's Door or Kluskap's Wigwam. Whitehead says that for generations offerings were made there and that this continues today. It was common for the Mi'kmaq to put fish-bones on the rock in front of the cave (Kluskap's Table). When Nova Scotia Museum staff visited the place, they found tobacco and sweet-fern offerings, both on the "Table" and inside the cave.[180]

Whitehead was at this time Assistant Curator in History at the Nova Scotia Museum. As a Mi'kmaq expert witness, she had attended a trial in 1988, in which some Mi'kmaq were accused of illegal moose-hunting.[181] The trial was a painful experience, since many of the accused were friends of hers:

> On a cold and dreary November afternoon, an exhausted Ruth Holmes Whitehead stepped out of a Sydney courtroom. 'Peter,' she said in an unusually angry tone of voice, 'this has nothing to do with justice, reconciliation, or human dignity. It has to do with winning. At times, I felt as if I were on trial.'
> 'Welcome to our cultural club,' I tried to console. 'Now you know just how the Micmac have been feeling for the last five hundred years.'[182]

Whitehead's work on Mi'kmaq traditions has been read and appreciated by many Mi'kmaq[183] and the Mi'kmaq poet Rita Joe dedicates a poem to her, *A Special Friend*, in one of her publications:

> *A Special Friend*
> (Ruth Holmes Whitehead)
>
> Somewhere there I have a friend
> In this place without end
> Written word we bring to view

---

[180] *Cape Breton Magazine*, Jan. 1990, no. 53.

[181] Whitehead 1991, foreword.

[182] Whitehead 1991, foreword. The quoted person is Peter Christmas, of the Micmac Association of Cultural Studies in Sydney, Nova Scotia.

[183] In the foreword to Whitehead, *The Old Man Told Us* (1991), Peter Christmas (the Micmac Association of Cultural Studies) writes: "By expertly and ingeniously interleafing written and oral excerpts, Ms. Whitehead has provided the Micmac with a more level field of human history." He also writes at the end: "*The Old Man Told Us* will be an excellent foundation for your introduction into our society. It will spark your interest to seek further knowledge."

Accumulating a purpose long overdue,
The message
of unknown fame
For the native of our country
The Indian game.
Somewhere there I have a friend
The archives are her trade,
A chronicler bringing nobility
Together we relate the wonders of my nation,
Our song a landing place.[184]

The poem shows how closely the Mi'kmaq sometimes work with scholars. But for the Mi'kmaq the reconstructing of their old traditions has mostly meant a balance between using the scholars' texts and their unwillingness to be totally embraced by them. To strengthen their cause, they sometimes refer to scholars' works, but they can at the same time be critical of them. It is because of this difference and through dynamic creativity that a Mi'kmaq identity is created.

The right to speak

The *Encyclopedia Canadiana*, printed in 1958, ends its description of the Mi'kmaq people with this black picture of the reserves: "There has been so much white intermixture that they retain relatively few Indian characteristics and give the effect of being a depressed white community."[185] But the television series about Kluskap in the 1960s and the access to old ethnographic texts gave the Mi'kmaq another picture than if they had read texts about themselves as a "depressed white community". The mountain debate opened another new way of being a Mi'kmaq.

This new Mi'kmaq identity, however, raised suspicions both within the Mi'kmaq community and in Canadian society. A traditionalist remembers his friends' comments when he put Native art on the wall, braided his hair and revived Mi'kmaq traditions: "They'd walk in and look around and say, 'Wow, are you ever *native*'."[186] The spokesman is fully aware that the new way of being Mi'kmaq would not have been possible in the 1950s: "[T]he nativeness is growing. And it's fortunate. If I were to fight for this mountain fifteen years ago, I'd be locked up in one of the mental hospitals. My people would have

[184] Joe 1991: 28.
[185] *Encyclopedia Canadiana. The Encyclopedia of Canada* 1958: 60.
[186] The *Toronto Star*, 20 June 1991, p. A: 21.

signed me in ... Some of our Elders ... I would never have believed fifteen years ago would be walking around with eagle feathers, going to powwows, dancing ..."[187] It was not clear who should be the spokesman for the group in the Kelly's Mountain debate. Some people on the reserve were sometimes talked about as "plastic shamans" or "apples" (red outside, but white inside). There was also a split between some traditionalists and the Mi'kmaq who were associated with Micmac Studies at the University College in Sydney. One traditionalist said this clearly to me at a *powwow*: "You should talk to the ordinary people, not just the 'academics'." To avoid an internal split on the mountain issue, one spokesman chose to turn to the Grand Council, the Mi'kmaqs' most important, traditional organization. The Grand Chief then gave him a note that sanctioned the right to speak for the group. The note had the following text:

> GRAND COUNCIL OF THE MI, KMAQ FIRST NATION
> TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN
> Please be advised that N.N. is the only appointed Grand Council representative who was mandated by the late grand chief N.N. to do what ever he can to preserve our sacred mountain. This mountain is very important to us in terms of our history and culture. Any donations of cash or equipment will be used to do what ever it takes to keep this mountain safe for our future and the future of our children. Mr. N.N. is the only person authorized by the Grand Council to solicit donations in our fight for the preservation of Kluskap Mountain for the Mi'mag Nation. As the new Grand Chief of the Mi,kmaq first nation, I Chief N.N. will verify that this mission was given to N.N. by the late Grand Chief N.N. in the summer of 1989 and that he has not ever been discharged of this duty.[188]

---

[187] Alf Hornborg 1994: 253.

[188] The letter is signed by the Grand Chief and was shown to me by the Mi'kmaq traditionalist who had been entrusted with the mission. The right to represent a group has been actively discussed among Natives. Sometimes the distrust of spokesmen has been built on a racial basis, where people have been accused of not being "full blood" and therefore not having the feeling for what is the "true faith". One example is Hyemeyohsts Storm, author of *Seven Arrows* (1972), who was discredited because he did not have parents who were full blood (Porterfield 1990: 153; cf. Kurkiala 1997: 116 pp.). A distinction is often made between those who represent the tribe and those who have the tribal leadership. A representative of the tribe may function as an external representative of the group and as a sparring partner for White society, while a tribal leader is more concerned with the group's internal issues.

Kelly's Mountain took on an important function as a vital symbol that could unite the different factions in Mi'kmaq society.[189] This greatly contributed to the Mi'kmaq nationalism that Bock said was missing when he visited them in the 1960s. But the negotiations for being recognized as a "true warrior" became extremely important in the official meetings in Canadian society. Some people were very critical of what they saw as a newly born interest among the Mi'kmaq in their traditions. The following polemic statement from a Mi'kmaq traditionalist concerns the distrust that he met as a traditionalist and a defender of his traditions. He strongly attacks those who call into question his engagement by asking him:

> ... where were you in the nineteen-fifties when the road was being built?
> I'll tell you where we were:
> We were in residential schools
> we were hungry
> we were uneducated
> we were beaten
> we were a controlled and oppressed nation
> our hair was short and we tried to
> walk in the footsteps of the White man
> (pause)
> Our hair is long
> and we walk tall
> we don't want nobody's footsteps
> we blaze our own trail
> and the good thing about it is
> we have people of the rainbow following behind us.[190]

The above critique by the traditionalist against Canadian society runs through time. It tells us about a history, a present time and a future. During history, the Mi'kmaq have been denied the right to speak. The residential school in this speech stands as a strong symbol of this denial. But the contemporary revitalization of the Mi'kmaq traditions has given the group new possibilities in life. The end of the speech reveals a hope of a better future. It is also impor-

[189] Even though there were disagreements between the Catholic traditionalists and the neotraditionalists (who preferred the pre-Columbian Mi'kmaq traditions), Kelly's Mountain was a fight that they could both join in and collaborate in.
[190] Video recording in Eskasoni, March 1992.

tant for the speaker to underline how Mi'kmaq traditionalism is supported by people all over the world (the people of the rainbow).

Construction and authenticity

Although the Mi'kmaq traditionalists strongly denied that the sacredness of Kluskap's Mountain was merely a modern construction, some people in Canadian society were still skeptical. Could some cultural traits just be put aside (like living in a *wigwam*) and some revived (Kluskap), that is, could people construct their history in just any way? In these postmodern times, we have learned to question whether there is only one way of looking at the past. A person is always caught up in his contemporary world, and history thus becomes a footprint of the present put into the past. With this way of viewing the past, historical descriptions thus turn into a kind of mythology.[191] Since the West has its own way of writing history and other people do not always follow this discourse, there will always be confrontation when the different worlds meet. A critical analysis of how this Western discourse works has been made by Jonathan Friedman:

> 1. The truth is singular. There is but one true version of the past.
> 2. The past consists of an arbitrarily chosen segment of a temporal continuum ending with the present moment.
> 3. The structure attributed to this past is the product of a specific kind of research carried out by those competent in the field.
> 4. This structure is objective and corresponds to proposition 1, that is, it is singular.
> 5. All other structures or interpretations attributed to the past are, by implication, ideological in the sense of misrepresentations. The 'native's point of view' is thus a mere folk model that is the royal road, perhaps, to the native unconscious, to the deep structures of the alien culture, but is never of any scientific value as defined in terms of the above paradigm.[192]

The above quotation gives examples of how the way to write history is culturally determined and also the way to wield power. James Clifford sees two hallmarks that have followed the historical studies of the "Oriental" or the

[191] Friedman 1994: 118; cf. Veyne 1983/1988, Foucault 1971/1993, 1974.
[192] Friedman 1994: 137-138.

"Indian": the belief in an ongoing tradition and the idea of a united self.[193] If the world looks as it does today, when everything is woven together, people will always, according to Clifford, in different ways be "inauthentic", trapped between cultures, implicated in others.[194] Clifford says that it is just as problematic to say that cultures have survived as it is to say that they have died and been resurrected. In his study of the construction of the Mashpee Indian identity he writes that they "made and remade themselves through specific alliances, negotiations, and struggles."[195] Geertz also sees this creativity in the Hopi culture, and the way in which the Hopi formulate and reformulate their prophecies. The Hopi are not passive vessels, who take over ideas from a hegemonic society, but creative culture-builders: "Hopi prophecy is not a matter of cultural borrowing, rather it is clearly an indigenous response to and a hermeneutical framework for the way cultures meet ... I think it is safe to assume that Hopi prophecy has served as an interpretive strategy since the beginnings of the Euro-American presence."[196] The Mi'kmaq have their lifeworld, an experience of life on the reserve that the Canadians do not have. But they also have their experiences of Canadian society. Their cultural creativity has been to respond to these two worlds in a Mi'kmaq way. In the 19th century Kluskap stories the Mi'kmaq could fight what they felt as alien and threatening in their lifeworld and at the same time strengthen their own way of being Mi'kmaq.[197] The Mi'kmaq of today also in a creative way tell their version of how it is to be a Mi'kmaq. A video recording of a meeting on the Eskasoni reserve in 1992 has this closing scene:

− Some young Mi'kmaq men gather around a big drum and chant while they rhythmically beat the drum.

---

[193] Clifford 1988: 10. Clifford dismisses essentialistic thinking, as regards both cultures and individuals ("identity, considered ethnographically, must always be mixed, relational, and inventive").

[194] Clifford 1988: 11; cf. Prins 1996: 7: "As an Indian nation, the Mi'kmaq, like other native groups in the Americas, are caught between two worlds − the indigenous realm of their forbears and the modern system dominated by white society."

[195] Clifford 1988: 338-339.

[196] Geertz 1992: 54.

[197] Parkhill (1997: 142) stresses not only the creative revitalization of traditions among the neotraditionalists, but also how the group shape their meaning by taking control themselves of Canadian society's stereotypical images of the "Indian": "It seems clear that besides making an effort to take control of the use of the "Indian" stereotype, neotraditionalists − extreme and not-so-extreme, academic and not-academic − are engaged in the religious process of making sense of their lives." He thinks neotraditionalism is ultimately generated as a religious answer to injustices, grounded in colonialism (p. 143). Neotraditionalism is the latest proof that "the minds and spirits of these Native Americans remain active, creative, and free" (p. 144).

− The camera focuses on a young Mi'kmaq boy (about 10 years old), who seems familiar with the event and thus confidently smiles at the cameraman.
− A White boy of the same age as the Mi'kmaq boy looks at the drummers. His father seems a bit uncomfortable with his situation
− A Mi'kmaq woman has her traditional cap on, with its roots in the 18th century French culture.
− Many traditionalist attributes are around, e.g. eagle feathers.
− A picture of Jesus is hanging on one wall.
− A wall picture tells that "I lost my wife to bingo".

It seems to be a Western characteristic to wish to find out if history can verify whether a cultural feature is a tradition. At a cultural-awareness day in Baddeck, Cape Breton Island, I heard a woman ask a Mi'kmaq woman (who displayed traditional dancing) over and over again how she could be sure that her dance steps really were traditional. "I have learned them from my mother and grandmother" was the answer the woman gave all the time.

When the Mi'kmaq refer to their traditions, they may use what they have read in scholars' texts ("readback"[198]), but it is just as common to refer to memories of the Elders. To strengthen the credibility of these memories, the Mi'kmaq say that they are related by reliable witnesses. Their reliability lies in the persons being respected relatives or individuals connected with persons of authority in Mi'kmaq society:

> I have spoken with some of the Elders, and one of the elders, who unfortunately has passed away was Annie Mae Bernard. *She was the daughter of the late Grand Chief Gabriel Sylliboy* [italics added]. She gave living testimony at the base of the Sacred Mountain at a demonstration there in the fall of '88 ... She told us about when she was a child, her father, who was Grand Chief at the time, took trips to the cave twice a year and these pilgrimages consisted of all the family ... When they arrived there, at the mouth of the cave ... There are three flat rocks ... where they would leave offers on this table.[199]

[198] "Readback" is a term defined by Burch, Jr. (1994: 444), as "the phenomenon of Native informants giving anthropologists information on their ancestor's way of life that they themselves acquired from reading anthropological reports and publications".
[199] *Network News. Nova Scotia Environmental Network*, July/August 1992, no. 2, p. 4.

It is as an Elder and as the daughter of the Grand Chief that this woman is referred to as a reliable source. The speaker can thus use her memories to give credibility to his words.[200] When the same speaker at another time stresses that it is neither a new invention nor just the policy of the Mi'kmaq to speak of the mountain as sacred, he once again refers to his mother:

> N.N. went up there several years ago, did not find no artifacts or no writings on the wall, but that does not say that this is not a historic site. My mother is eighty-two years old, she is a living witness that it was sacred when she was a child. So it's not just recently that, when development was proposed for that, that we decided, well, let's make this a sacred site ...[201]

We must not forget that traditionally the Mi'kmaq was not a writing culture, and they cannot refer to written documents to prove a tradition. Instead their tradition is found in practice, in the Elders' memories, and in oral tradition. The Mi'kmaqs' historiography shows similarities with those of other oral cultures, such as what Friedman writes about the Hawaiians' construction of their traditions.[202] The Mi'kmaqs' modern way of relating to traditions has arisen, as among the Hawaiians, in opposition to a dominating Western society:

> The means by which the Micmac try to formulate new premises for Indian/White interaction are provided by their history and constrained by contemporary economic and political realities. The history of the Micmac tribe is, first and foremost, the history of how an economic base was eroded, and how reserves were reduced to economic lacunae within Canadian society.[203]

Friedman is a little ironic over those who look for exotic totalities or visit libraries to trace cultural continuities.[204] A Mi'kmaq traditionalist preferred to express his view of cultural continuity like this (a way of depicting culture that actually may be chosen from a modern textbook on anthropology!): "[S]ome people think that Mi'kmaq religion and culture is gone, but we are

---

[200] Cf. Martin 1999: 110. By referring to "the Elders", the speaker gains authority among the Yupiit.
[201] Tape recording (Alf Hornborg 1994: 252).
[202] Friedman 1994: 125.
[203] Larsen 1983: 132.
[204] Cf. Friedman 1994: 125.

Mi'kmaq and *what we are doing is our culture*" [italics added].[205] The Western historiography has also in recent years been critically discussed:

> Since the attribution of meaning and construction of cultural models is a motivated practice, our own purported truth-value vision of history and ethnography must be understood in terms of the way in which it is produced, if we are to place it alongside the way other people produce their own visions.[206]

Just as there has been a tendency to define the Hawaiians as "pre-Cook Hawaiians", there has been a tendency to depict the Mi'kmaq as "pre-Columbian Mi'kmaq". Like the modern Hawaiians' project of reviving of their traditional identity, the Mi'kmaqs' attempt to return to their traditions has emerged as a process of appropriating their past from the vantage-point of a modern identity. There is, of course, among the Mi'kmaq (as among the Hawaiians) a difference between the modern, revitalized culture and the culture before colonization.[207] The traditionalists may speak about their tradition in an essentialistic perspective, but this should be judged more as a part of their internal way of building up their contemporary culture than as reflecting historical times.[208] The only access that the modern Mi'kmaq may have to their history is via texts by missionaries, colonizers, archaeologists and anthropologists.[209] The following example shows that these texts are important for the Mi'kmaq. Milton Born-with-a-Tooth was one of the guests invited to a meeting in Eskasoni in March 1992, where Mi'kmaq, environmental activists and politicians gathered to debate the future of Kelly's Mountain. Milton, a Native and a well-known, environmental activist, was given Ruth Holmes Whitehead's *The Old Man Told Us* as a present from a Mi'kmaq woman. This book is a compilation of quotations and written memories concerning Mi'kmaq history. While she handed over the book, the woman told him that every time she reads it, she learns something new.

---

[205] Alf Hornborg 1994: 253. Cf. Park (1994: 39): "no interpretation (in religion or in any other field) can be regarded as final, because meaning is never neutral − it is always contingent on social and cultural circumstances."

[206] Friedman 1994: 143.

[207] Cf. Friedman 1994: 126.

[208] Conversation with Professor Tord Olsson, of Lund University.

[209] Prins 1996: 4.

Culture-building is meaning-building

If writing history is biased by how people create meaning, it is hard when interests collide for one party to legitimize its dominant position over the other party. Maybe this was what a young Mi'kmaq wanted to express at a public meeting at University College in Sydney, Cape Breton Island, when he gave his view of education and on the concept of "carrying capacity":

> I don't stand up here and say, I have a Master's ... All these things I have to say to prove, this is me, you know what I mean? I don't have to do that ... I'm just a human being. I speak from my heart, and that's the way it should be.[210]

A study of Mi'kmaq traditions can on the first examination be equivalent to totting up constant losses. There are, of course, actual losses, but if we are going to examine the "culture loss", the concept of culture must be discussed. I have mentioned above how earlier scholars upheld an essentialistic concept of culture. In the Mi'kmaq case, it became a notion of an original Mi'kmaq culture, placed in pre-Columbian time. If one chooses to have this essentialistic view of culture, the Mi'kmaq culture has been radically drained of blood. The mighty *buoin* has gone, bone ceremonials and hunting rituals have disappeared and no one lives in a *wigwam* any longer. The Mi'kmaq of today use modern health care, go to supermarkets to do their shopping and live in Westernized houses. But if the culture concept is given a dynamic definition, in which culture is always an ongoing process that is negotiated in meetings, the Mi'kmaqs' own way of meeting changes becomes not a culture loss but cultural creativity.[211] When the Mi'kmaq of today speak about "a living tradition", they are not necessarily referring to a continuity from the past that can be verified in a scholarly way. "A living tradition" may instead be read as analogous to life. When something grows, it responds to the environment and integrates different influences. Geertz shows, with examples from the Hopi, the potential that people have for meeting changes: "In focusing on human beings as culturally competent, social agents continually engaged in negotiating, inventing, and reinventing meaningful interpretation of their worlds, we

---

[210] Alf Hornborg 1994: 259.

[211] Cf. Handler's and Linnekin's critique (1984: 276) of those who depict culture as an unchangeable essence: "there is no essential, bounded tradition: tradition is a model of the past and is inseparable from the interpretation of tradition in the present."

come to see and understand the contradictions of human life not so much as contradictions, but more as the effervescence of creative genius."[212]

When scholars in the 1970s discussed other ways of defining culture, we receive other reports from the reserves than the gloomy ones about culture losses. In Larsen's monograph, he does not regard it as essential that the revival of traditions among the Mi'kmaq is carrying an unbroken tradition further. Instead he focuses on the way that traditions are negotiated, partly within a group and partly in a dialogue with Canadian society. Here the Mi'kmaq culture becomes, not a house in which more and more doors have been locked, but something that the Mi'kmaq can continuously build and rebuild with the tools and materials they have at hand. The influences from Canadian society have been both the limit on and the conditions for how the work will proceed. It is important to stress, though, that the difference also involves a power relation. This hegemony in many cases has created an alien feeling among the Mi'kmaq towards what they regard as a colonial society. But, in this gap between taking part and keeping a distance, the Mi'kmaqs' possibilities of creating their own meanings have taken form. It is difficult for the observer to experience the existential depth that the new orientation means for the man who takes part, since it is in the taking part that meaning is created:

> We must learn to distinguish between the symbols themselves and the *state of mind* they convey. The external vehicles might be 'constructive' in our eyes; but the most important thing is if these objects help the Mi'kmaq themselves to convey important experiences and meanings as a common identity and self-esteem.[213]

The young generation today may have forgotten the sacred places, and the concept of Mother Earth may be to them a newly created image. But the acquirement of concepts or the reconnections with sacred places engage people

---

[212] Geertz 1992: viii.

[213] Alf Hornborg 1995: 174, my translation. Original Swedish text: "Vi måste lära oss att skilja på symbolerna i sig och den *sinnesstämning* de förmedlar. Den yttre rekvisitan må vara hur 'konstruerad' som helst i våra ögon; det väsentliga är om dessa ting hjälper mikmakerna själva att förmedla viktiga upplevelser och innebörder som gemensam identitet och självkänsla." Cf. Handler & Linnekin (1984: 286): scholars may raise the objection that traditions are not genuinely traditional, since they cannot be traced back in history, but "the origin of cultural practice is largely irrelevant to the experience of tradition, authenticity is always defined in the present". Tradition is thereby not "an objective property of phenomena but an assigned meaning"(ibid.).

and this activity creates meaning. A young Sto:lo Indian describes his relation to his people's sacred places like this:

> I think they are important for a number of reasons. Lots of people in my generation don't even know they're there. When you learn about them they become important to you. It's like what [Elder] Andy Commodore was saying the other day in the Research Centre: 'Indians are returning back to their spirituality.' This is good because it'll help in pulling our Indian people together ...
> These sites are part of my Indian identity and these sites are an important aspect of our spirituality. I've never related to the non-Indian God. I have only looked to him so as not to take any chances, so to speak. But now I'm beginning to understand God, or the Great Spirit in Indian terms and these sites are an important part of that understanding. These places bind the culture and society which is the same thing ...
> There's a lot of things that seem to be lost, like my language. And, because of my language, or not knowing it, there's lots I didn't find out. But now I'm beginning to find out. There's lots my dad knew but never told me because it was only talked about in Indian; like all about these places.[214]

The actual process, that is, the way to the goal, became important when the Mi'kmaq fought to secure their mountain. If there was any uncertainty among the younger Mi'kmaq traditionalists about what it meant to follow the traditional way, there was power in the engagement to have the mountain declared as sacred or, as a Mi'kmaq warrior said: "Maybe ... it will come to us up there, from the mountain".[215]

A Mi'kmaq traditionalist confirmed some years later what an important learning process the fight was:

> The mountain has to support the unity, of not only the Mi'kmaq population but also the world community, and that an awful lot of good has come out of the mountain. More human relations, healing, solidarity, union, unity has come out of that mountain than any of the gravel and granite that could been possibly shipped anywhere, more than any jobs that could have been created as a result of that superquarry. I think what the mountain has produced is something

[214] Mohs 1994: 206.
[215] Alf Hornborg 1994: 253.

> that can't be bought ... It produced a lot of pain, but it produced a lot of education, healing, tolerance, pride, spirituality and identity back to the people.[216]

A ritual can be observed or practiced. When the scholar observes the ritual, an outsider perspective is created, in which symbols are interpreted, social structures revealed and traditions compared. But for the participant in the ritual, the most important part is not to get an insight into how the ritual is constructed. The strength in ritual is in participating. The participant's experience is, most of all, the insider perspective. Time may also be an important part of the rite, because the participants must feel that they are taking part in a changing process.[217] The mountain battle, with the above quotation in mind, could thus be likened to a immense, long-lasting ritual for the Mi'kmaq.

When it comes to the written texts, the Mi'kmaq of today can combine the scholars' outsider perspective with an insider perspective. Below follow examples of how the group chose to display itself.

Paqtatek

"Truths" taken for granted in a culture have today been in focus for scholars to deconstruct and question. Even Marx said that given truths actually only display specific historical conditions. When anthropologists meet other cultures, they experience other ways of classifying the world. These explanations may diverge from Western patterns of thought, but they still follow a logic within the system in which they are operating.[218] Foucault found it important to study how cultural limits were drawn and how power was constituted in defining concepts. When someone talks about reason, the unreasonable has at the same time been defined. In order to get the "normal" to appear clearly, the abnormal is needed. When Foucault writes about the history of madness, his intention is not to write a clinical study of people who suffer from mental illness, but to study madness as a cultural phenomenon.[219] The concept of reason in itself does not carry an eternal essence. Instead it works in relation to what is defined as unreason and thereby defines concepts also as a way of exercising power. Madness thus cannot be studied as an isolated phenomenon,

---

[216] Dalby 1999: 12.
[217] Rappaport 1999: 217.
[218] See, e.g., Evans-Pritchard's analysis of witchcraft among the Azande (1937) or Horton (1964).
[219] Foucault 1961; cf. Beronius 1986.

since it has been constructed out of the "reasonable" in order to make the "normal" more clearly depicted and defined.

When the Mi'kmaq today want to take part in contemporary society, it is obvious that they have to relate to the ascribed images that Canadian society has produced. Canadian society has earlier had the power to define the "Indian", and the Mi'kmaq do not fully recognize themselves in this definition. The difference between them and the White society thus acts as a screen to the speeches they hold and the texts they produce. *Paqtatek* is one example of a book produced by the Mi'kmaq as a way of building a bridge between these two worlds: "How do we bridge the wide gulf between the Mi'kmaq and the Western mind? PAQTATEK is one such bridge that allows the reader to cross over into the Mi'kmaq spirit and to walk into Mi'kmaq life with all its challenges, beauty and pain."[220] The Mi'kmaq word *paqtatek* is explained as:

> …a light source shining onto, and being reflected off, an object. The light source is immaterial and it only describes the type of light reflected from a cloud or ground fog where the effects of the light are in evidence long before the source of light is seen:
> The Mi'kmaq students at the University College of Cape Breton reflected their light to their professors. The students' light was refracted back, enhanced, becoming a more powerful light source. The effects of this light source are seen long before the source of the light is seen.[221]

In Lottie Marshall's contribution to *Paqtatek,* she discusses the differences between Mi'kmaq and Western culture. Marshall says there has been a danger in that the Mi'kmaq have too one-sidedly channeled their attention towards Canadian society only: "A large majority of Natives go through life in this depressed state of mind. They feel that something is missing from their lives."[222] Eleanor Johnson also discusses in her article what she sees as a difference between the two cultures:

> [W]e have two different trains of thinking: the western thought and, I don't know what we call our thinking, you know, naturalistic. I

[220] Dan Christmas' (the Union of Nova Scotia Indians') presentation of the book [see the back cover].
[221] Patrick Johnson, short introduction in *Paqtatek* about the meaning of the concept.
[222] Marshall 1991: 70.

> don't know the white term for it. But we think different about things. ... non-Native academics [are] forever trying to change around what we're saying to make their concepts try to match our concepts which is, you know, totally different ... But it was frustrating for me. The educators and the people − they found it hard to accept that, you know, I could contribute something that is worthwhile saying. For a change, the Indians said what it should be, not what another person, what they perceived us to be.[223]

Johnson discusses this difference, but this time by stressing the Mi'kmaq experience: "They say that history is each person's reality, or each person's perception of experience. And we have our own reality of who we are. And somewhere along the line, I would like to see that developed."[224] But the Mi'kmaq are also aware of the difficulties in giving a Mi'kmaq perspective and maybe not having their traditions respectfully treated by White society: "There is always the fear of ridicule from the non-Indian."[225]

What specific characteristics would the Mi'kmaq then ascribe to themselves? Eleanor Johnson lists some of the most important features: respect for the Elders, sharing, cooperating, and respecting people and nature: "Tribal consciousness provides an alternative perspective in a dominant non-Native culture."[226]

Epilogue

Ideas and traditions do not float around as unchangeable essences through space and time only to be reproduced in people's lives. The Mi'kmaqs' formulations in the 1990s of their way of viewing nature and their traditions must be seen from the standpoint of their modern way of being-in-the-world. They are no longer premodern hunters, but settled, modern inhabitants of reserves. History has not only made them into double citizens. The settlement on the reserves became an important cut-off point in their relation to nature. "Nature" is no longer the hunter's home, it is the world outside the home for the modern citizen in the reserve. To live in the Canadian "different land" has created an alien feeling towards the White society, but life in the reserve has also strengthened a feeling of belonging to a special group, the Mi'kmaq. This

[223] E. Johnson 1991: 14pp. (preface in *Paqtatek*).
[224] E. Johnson; see the end of *Paqtatek*.
[225] Marshall 1991: 69.
[226] Johnson 1991: 29-30.

Mi'kmaq identity grew stronger as a revitalization of the old traditions began in the 1970s. The Mi'kmaq traditionalism runs parallel with other Native groups' protests against what they saw as the White men's oppression and, in the long run, the creation of "Mother Earth". It became very important for the Mi'kmaq to cooperate with other Native groups; among other things, Mi'kmaq traditionalists fought side by side with the Mohawk Warriors in Oka at the end of the 1980s.

The Mi'kmaqs' interest in their own traditions was combined during the 1980s with a growing engagement in environmental issues. In school, the Mi'kmaq children were trained to adopt a Western, scientific view of the world. By reading the newspapers and watching television they got, like the rest of the Canadians, an insight into those environmental problems that have been growing more and more in the wake of industrialism. When their own province of Nova Scotia was threatened, the Mi'kmaq joined other environmental groups to tackle the problems. Their engagement was given special attention in Canadian society and spokesmen for the group visited both Sweden (in the 1980s and 1990s) and Scotland (in the 1990s). There had already, since the Romantic era, been a stage on which "Indians" were invited to rise and talk as wise, ecological gurus. The expectations about what they should say were already laid down: "Wise" words, like "Mother Earth", were welcome. A certain portion of criticism of civilization was also allowed; White men had distanced themselves from nature. This was the reason why nature had now become only a resource, ready to be exploited in the service of its master, "the Crown of Creation".

The Mi'kmaq made their entrance on the stage but were now, unlike their ancestors, fully aware of the role that they had been given to play. However, they did not slavishly follow the script, but formulated a counter-language that became a mightier protest than was expected. The Mi'kmaq referred both to their traditions and to the knowledge they had acquired from the modern world in their struggle. They said that their traditions should be valued equally with the White culture, since they also had sacred places, a prophet and a God. When the Mi'kmaq said that all traditions are equal, they at the same time made demands on Canadian society that claimed it was based on democratic principles. Kluskap was a living tradition for the Mi'kmaq, not a fairy-tale character in a historical past, when people lacked scientific insights into how the world was built up. This tradition should be respected in a democratic society. To exploit the mountain was the same thing as to show disrespect for other peoples' right to have their traditions.

The Mi'kmaqs' profile in Canadian society is clearly seen in the texts they produce today. There have been tendencies to dismiss this Mi'kmaq profile as a modern construction and thus not a "true" tradition. Some people even suspected that the engagement in the Kelly's Mountain affair was not genuine, by questioning whether the Kluskap tradition was still a living tradition among modern Mi'kmaq. The dilemma for the traditionalists is that the language they must use to make them cogent in a wider context is also the same language that can easily be deconstructed and cause them to be depicted as inauthentic. An analysis of the speeches shows how the Mi'kmaq built up their arguments on the environmental movement, science (ecology) and romanticized Indian images in popular literature. The analysis may also show how traditions were revitalized and some newly created. At this level of the analysis, the scholar takes an outsider view of the Mi'kmaq traditions. However, this objectifying method gives the scholar a hard time in depicting how meaning is created in activities, since meaning is not an essence of the words and analyses themselves but is created by living people. A mere study of the historical traditions of Kelly's Mountain, in order to see how the modern Mi'kmaq use them in their struggle, is to miss an important point, namely the importance of taking an active part in an ongoing process. My visits to *powwows*, to sweat-lodge ceremonies, and to public meetings and, of course, my insights into the daily life of the reserves gave me glimpses of the meaning in the fight. Life in the reserves also showed that there were factions in the group, but the struggle for Kelly's Mountain became an important unifying factor for them all.

After several years of struggle and with the result in his hands, one of the spokesmen for the Sacred Mountain Society confirmed the importance of the process itself. For many modernized Mi'kmaq, it meant a new orientation in life. The work had two sides − it gave knowledge and it created meaning. The traditionalist said that the return of Kluskap is a prophecy, a new time to come for the Mi'kmaq. In the the 19th century prophecy, Kluskap's Mountain was the "door" that would open at the return of Kluskap. And looking back to the 1990s, we may say metaphorically that the mountain opened a door that helped the modern Mi'kmaq in their struggle. Kluskap was now not only sent to bring a message to the Mi'kmaq as a symbol of this new life. In the modern story, the Mi'kmaq give him a role as a global warrior, who is not only saving the Mi'kmaq, their traditions and his sacred mountain but is defending all the interests that concern Mother Earth.

VI. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The story of the Canadian Mi'kmaq Indians may be read as a story of two worlds. One world consists of different kinds of texts about the Mi'kmaq people, produced by missionaries, scholars, popular writers, drama directors and film producers and, until recently, created in the White Canadian society. The other world is the lifeworld of the Mi'kmaq. Here we meet a group of people who dwell and engage themselves in the world under certain historical, political, economic and cultural conditions. Taking these two worlds into consideration is one reason why I have divided my thesis into three large parts. First, I discuss general issues, chiefly the difference between the local lifeworlds and the models constructed from these worlds. Since I am writing about the Mi'kmaq Indians, my examples are selected from the North American Indian tribes, mainly from hunters and gatherers. Secondly, I focus on the period in the Mi'kmaq history between 1850 and 1930, when the Mi'kmaq hunters were forced to settle on reserves. Thirdly, I explore their life as modern citizens living on reserves in the 1990s and their struggle to prevent the establishment of a superquarry on Cape Breton Island in Nova Scotia.

The Romantic epoch in the 19th century nourished the idea of the "Noble Savage". But scholars of today have shown that, when the early Romantics sought to "unveil" the wisdom of nature that they thought the Indians were imbued with, they actually expressed chiefly their own criticism of civilization. There are, however, tendencies even among modern writers to follow this Romantic path. When scholars of environmental ethics write about an Indian biocentric (or ecocentric) worldview, a critical examination will easily reveal whether the concept is not only the old and worn-out image of "Indian wisdom", dressed up in new clothes in order to harmonize better with modern conditions. In that case, it is indirectly also their way of delivering a critique of modernity. Instead of considering the complex lifeworlds that we find among *both* Native Americans *and* Europeans, it seems as though many scholars and other writers start with a vague model of the "Western worldview", criticize this Western worldview for being one of the roots of our environmental crisis and then out of this model construct its antithesis, a "save-the-world model". At this point, I wish to stress clearly that the aim of my critical study of texts and models is not to cast suspicion on either the traditional Mi'kmaq hunter's care for the world he inhabited or the modern Native's engagement in environmental issues. On the contrary, I truly admire

my Mi'kmaq friends who struggle hard to achieve a better world for their children. But if the model and images of the Indian as a kind of environmental guru are constructed by Westerners and then used by the same constructors as representing an indigenous voice which can teach us how to solve global, environmental problems, then we have learned nothing but how a Westerner thinks and dreams of a better world.

The concept of biocentricity thus needs to be contextualized. It is, of course, not the same thing to dwell in Nova Scotia's forests as a hunter in the 19th century as it is to view the forest from the window of a home in a reserve at the end of the 20th century. The concept cannot, of course, cover two such different lifeworlds. But if we contextualize the concept of biocentricity into specific lifeworlds, it may be used to discuss different epistemologies, as well as alternative ways of relating to nature.

Since anything in the backwash of postmodernity runs the risk of being dismissed as just a construction, it is therefore even more important today to be aware of what is a construction and what is a lived-in world. People live their lives, first of all, engaged *in* the world. Their constructed model *of* the world is the first step in detaching themselves from it. The scholar's interpretation and construction of other people's constructed models are a further step of detachment from the lifeworlds, and at this level the scholar's work always runs the risk of being reduced to nothing more than a "text". But these texts are in many cases the only sources of our knowledge of the past. Aware of the problem of texts as constructions, I have chosen in my study of the Mi'kmaq people to examine more closely the stories about the culture hero Kluskap. In my work, this character is the key *persona* in revealing how the Mi'kmaq have conceptualized place and environment, tradition and resistance in time.

The notions of "one with nature", "holy occupation", and "deep relations" to the land

In my study of local lifeworlds and abstract constructions, I discuss three common images of the Indians: they are "one with nature", nature is sacred to them and they have specific bonds to their land. One reason for many misinterpretations has been that the traditional hunter's way of perceiving nature and non-humans seems to be radically different from the (often urban) writer's view, which has represented the so-called Cartesian tradition and clearly dichotomizes nature and culture, ascribing only to humans the gift of being "persons" with reason and souls. Viewed through the eyes of this Western writer, Indians seem to have nourished feelings of being one with nature.

However, if one considers the hunter's lifeworld, this is a paradoxical statement, since it presupposes a cultural conception of nature as something one can be either detached from or united with. The traditional Mi'kmaq hunter's view of nature and culture was not based on such a dichotomy; he shared his world with non-humans. One way to express this sharing in cultural terms was to use terms of kinship. A whale could thus be addressed as a grandfather and a rock talked about as a petrified grandmother. But these relationships express ways of being engaged in the world and are not the same as being one with it.

Not only the nature/culture dichotomy must be transcended in order to understand the traditional, Mi'kmaq, hunter cosmology. When Western scholars describe hunting in traditional societies as a "holy occupation", it reveals a similar perspective that juxtaposes two worlds. One of the worlds is secular and needs the objects (weapons) and technical skills for hunting. The other world is "holy", with suprahuman powers. To be able to kill his prey, the hunter is dependent on ritual and animal spirits. But hunting can be holy only for one who distinguishes between holy and profane, as Hallowell remarked in the 1920s. Of course, the traditional hunter knew that he must use weapons and skill to kill his prey, but he also included the prey's perspective of the hunt. He related to his prey as to a sentient being, a subject, worthy of respect and care. This relation, visualized in ritual, may for the Westerner be interpreted as a "holy" occupation, but for the hunter it is a way to show respect for a "person" who gives his or her life to you. To acquire knowledge of an "animal person" in order to transform it into prey was to know it as a subject. The concept of animism, ascribed to premodern societies' cosmologies, may in this case be redefined as a relational epistemology, and not like the old Tylorian animism that dismissed the hunter's worldview as primitive religion and failed epistemology.

One of the images also concerns the Indian and the land. In the modern fieldworkers' texts, we read how being-in-the-field has given the scholar a radically different experience than working only with texts. The "Indians" become Yupik, Mi'kmaq or Cree hunters, and get names and faces, i.e. they are living persons and not stereotypes. In traditional textbooks, the "Indians" could easily be made into images, impersonalized beings with a *general* love for their land and nature. But, unlike an image, a human being is situated in the world and is thus engaged in *specific* places. If deteched from this context, the personal engagement in specific places may be interpreted, by people who have an outsider view of the place, as love of a generalized nature. When

scholars write that the Indians had specific bonds to the places they inhabited, they forget that this is not a unique Indian hallmark, but a general human attitude; places are not indifferent to any humans. In my thesis, I describe different views and experiences of places and nature. The English and French place-names in Nova Scotia are historical examples of how important it was for the colonizers as newcomers to rebuild the familiar landscape from their homelands and thereby to feel at home in the New World. When the landscape of Nova Scotia was transformed into a farming area, the Mi'kmaq could not continue their life as hunters. Their former hunting-grounds became private property and the Mi'kmaq were given the "left-overs" (the reserves). The physical conquest of the land, and the renaming of Mi'kmaq places, was also a cultural annexation of a landscape. Thus, the whole Mi'kmaq identity and culture were affected. This may be one reason why so much has been written about the Indians' relation to their land. Throughout history, this loss of land has been a main issue for all Natives in their dialogues with the colonizers. If it seems that they often emphasize their bonds to the land, it may be that they have been put into a context in which they have constantly to defend or claim their rights to it.

Kluskap and the changing lifeworlds

Today the loss of land during the 19th century still gives echoes in Mi'kmaq lives. One way to explore the radical changes is to follow the stories of the Mi'kmaq culture hero Kluskap and his deeds. The stories have continuity over time, in spite of the changes. But, as is the case with all traditions, the Kluskap character is affected by the changes in people's lifeworlds. Thus Kluskap has been spoken of as a beaver hunter, a coming Messiah who will save the oppressed Mi'kmaq from the new reserves or as a protector of a mountain that is threatened by the establishment of a superquarry. These examples stem from three contexts; when the Mi'kmaq were hunters, when they were forced to settle down on the reserves, and from their life as modern citizens living in reserves in the 1990s.

The stories that depict Kluskap as a transformer of the landscape and as a beaver hunter can be read as the hunter's narration of his environment. An island is Kluskap's canoe or his left-overs from a dinner, amethysts his beads, and the Minas Basin a huge beaver pond. It is not fruitful to ask if the Mi'kmaq really believed in these stories. It is better to talk about them as the "poetics of dwelling". The stories reveal knowledge that is born out of the practice of being a hunter, e.g. how different animals live. But the storyteller

combines these observations with narrative elements in the stories. Kluskap as a beaver hunter is, however, just one side of the culture hero's complex character. One reason for this complexity is that the earliest written stories about him date from the 1850s, when the Mi'kmaq had already, for a long time, been well acquainted with Christianity. The stories about Kluskap clearly show influences from the Christian religion. At first, I tried to find some consistency in accounts of Kluskap's appearance, but I soon realized that this was not the right thing to do. In order to find any logic in the stories about Kluskap, one should not look at the essence of his character, but at the changes in the Mi'kmaq lifeworld.

When the scholars in the 1950s and the 1960s explained why the Mi'kmaqs' belief in Kluskap had faded, they said that it was a result of education and modernization. These scholars wrote about the process as a "culture loss", but even if Kluskap is more or less absent from the stories during this period, this fact also has an important story to tell. The radical changes made the Mi'kmaq focus more on modern Canadian society than on their hunting traditions. When all the children were put into schools and more efficiently assimilated into Canadian society, a new generation was born. This generation had as its home not the forests but the reserves. But although the Mi'kmaq gained a steadily higher standard of living, they saw that they were not equally sharing with White society the benefits of modernization. This injustice did not affect only the Mi'kmaq. During the 1960s and 1970s, radical groups in the Western world started to criticize bitterly those forces in their society that were responsible for starvation and environmental destruction. Since the Mi'kmaq could now read and follow the news on television, they had access to these larger, ongoing discussions about injustices and the global, environmental crisis. As during the Romantic epoch, White people were suddenly again interested in Indian traditions, but not only as fanciful stories. Had the Mi'kmaq, like other Native groups, perhaps a key to an ancient wisdom that was needed to save the world but lost to the modern, disillusioned and disenchanted Westerner?

When the Mi'kmaq themselves in the 1990s again referred to Kluskap in the media, it was because of a planned superquarry. When they discussed the quarry plans, they focused on two things – the Kluskap tradition and the Mi'kmaq (versus the Western) way of viewing nature. The Kluskap tradition had been displayed since the 1960s in television series, theater plays and written books, but these things were mainly produced as entertainment by White authors. However, the Mi'kmaq had an ambiguous relation to Canadian

society's texts about Kluskap. They sometimes referred to them, but they also strongly rejected the way in which White authors (e.g. Kay Hill) depicted their traditions: "Kluskap is not a fairy tale, a bed-time story", said one of the Mi'kmaq traditionalists in the 1990s, "He's a prophecy." A prophecy brings a message and a hope, unlike stories told for entertainment. To destroy Kluskap's dwelling on Kelly's Mountain was seen by the Mi'kmaq as an act of disrespect for their traditions. It was more relevant for them to discuss Kluskap from the point of view of *respecting* their traditions than to answer questions from White society as to whether they really still *believed* in Kluskap.

The other discussion concerning Kluskap was related to modern environmental issues and the future. When the Mi'kmaq display Kluskap as an icon of the modern, Green warrior, defending Mother Earth, this stems from their environmental engagement and modern being-in-the-world. Today the Mi'kmaq are educated in Western scholarly disciplines, e.g. natural history and ecology. The stories about Kluskap as a beaver hunter, transforming the landscape, are replaced by secular books on science. But what we see today, among the Mi'kmaq, as well as among other Native groups, is an unwillingness merely to adopt the Western, secular way of talking about nature. What the Mi'kmaq did, during their environmental struggle in the 1990s, was to spiritualize the science they had been taught in school and refer to their traditional way of viewing nature. However, the Mi'kmaq tradition is, because of the colonization, a complex story. Kluskap is a part of it, but so are influences from Christianity (holy places, Kluskap as a prophet). When the Mi'kmaq today put forward demands on modern society, their spokesmen must manage to cope with different contexts in order to make a dialogue possible. General statements about nature and holy places fit well into the more abstract contexts that modernity has put humans into. Local engagements in specific places thus become Mother Earth, a complex tradition becomes a god (Kluskap) and many, traditionally important places fuse into one: the Mi'kmaqs' holy mountain. It is obvious, though, that the Mi'kmaq have chosen *their* way when interests diverge and confrontations arise.

New roads to follow

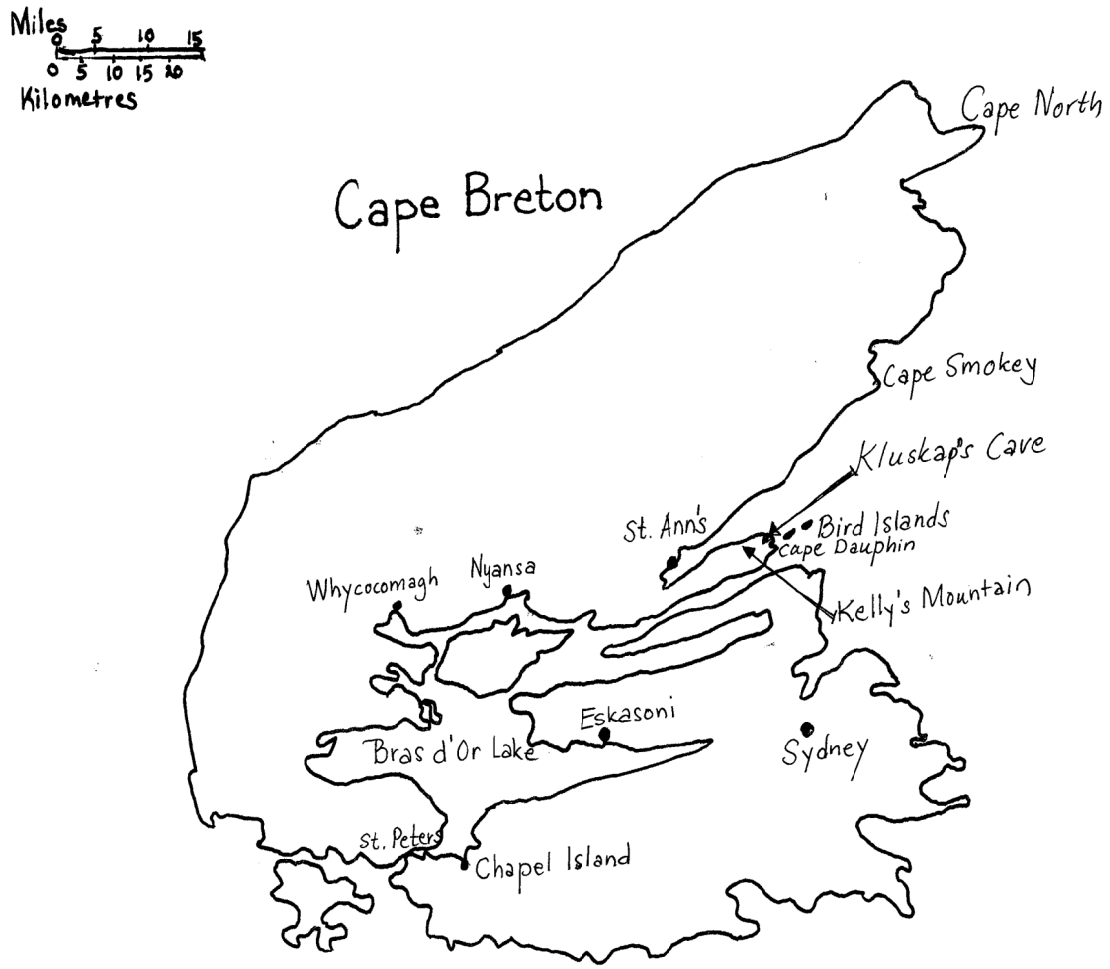
It may be that colonization dissolved the traditional hunter's lifeworld, but this does not prevent the Mi'kmaq from reflecting on and alluding to that world. These reflections play an important role when they are writing their own modern history. The revival of their former traditions and their integra-

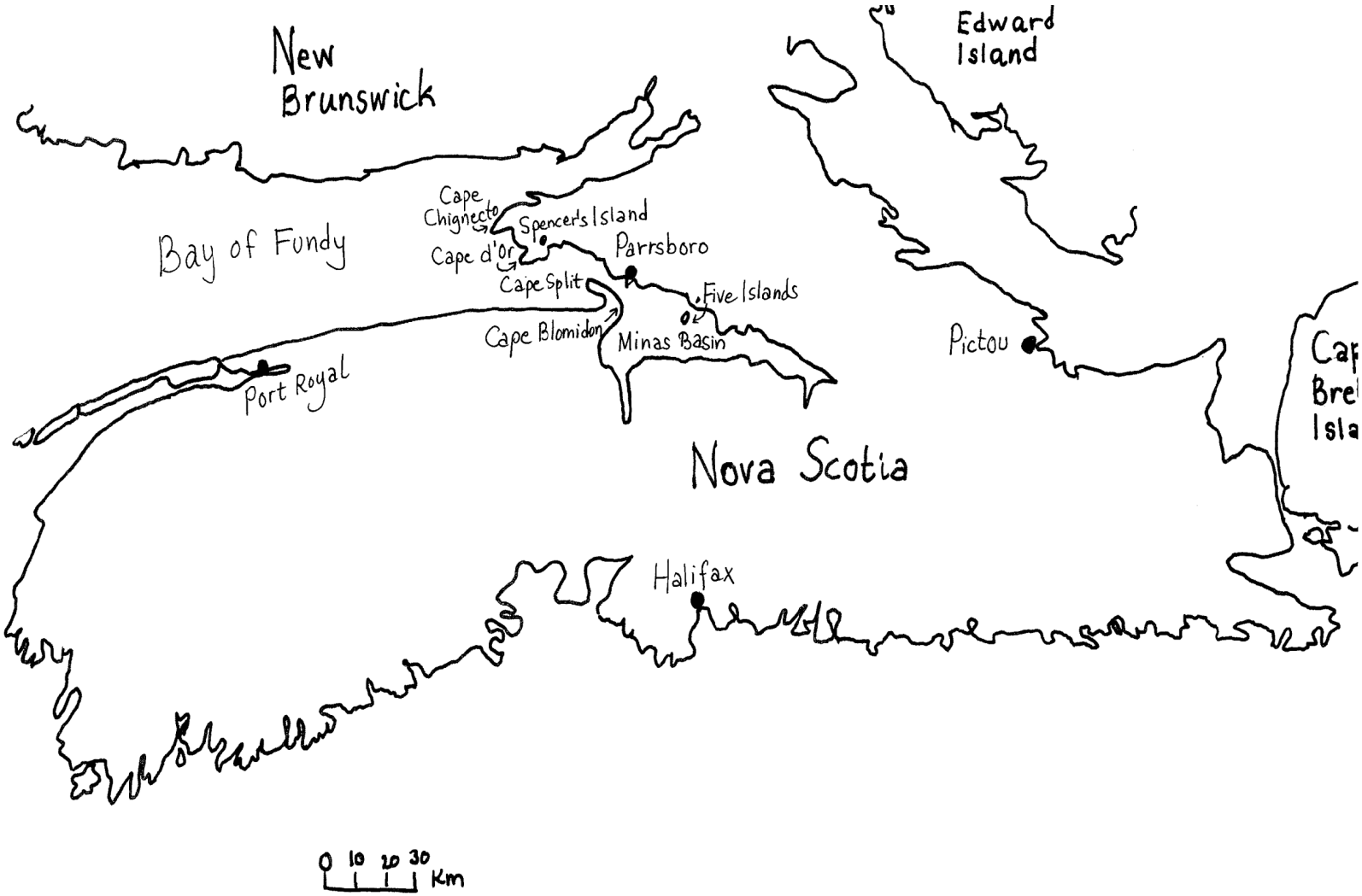
tion into modern life may be one explanation of why the Mi'kmaq today seem to share the same biocentric worldview as their hunting ancestors. There is, however, an important difference as regards whether this modern worldview emanates from a life as a hunter or from a contemporary interest among the Mi'kmaq in their former tradition as hunters. The Mi'kmaq contribution to what may be called a "sacred ecology" thus stems from how the Mi'kmaq today engage themselves in environmental problems: from knowledge of scientific disciplines (e.g. ecology) and their pride in the Mi'kmaq (sacred) traditions. It is important to stress that the concept is twofold. The Mi'kmaq showed that they took into account both sacredness and scientific knowledge in the Kelly's Mountain dispute. The mountain issue was an important event in which the Mi'kmaq spokesmen could officially formulate a spiritualized science and display the Mi'kmaq traditions. Although they gave a lot of scientific reasons against the quarry plans, it was their arguments about "the sacred" that drew most attention from Canadian society, probably because these arguments were hard for the quarry spokesmen to refute, but also because the arguments blended in well with the Indian image. The Mi'kmaq spokesmen, however, were well aware of this image. In saying this, I do not intend to imply that the arguments about the sacredness of the mountain were just Mi'kmaq rhetoric. That would be to dismiss all the Mi'kmaq engagement in the mountain issue. But if one focuses only on the "sacred", this would dismiss the Mi'kmaq as educated Canadians, acquainted today with modern, environmental discussions. It is in the combination of the sacred and the scientific (ecology), anchored in world of the reserve, that makes this model into a modern Mi'kmaq way of viewing nature. The contemporary Mi'kmaq clearly see the discrepancy between the constructions of them and the lived world. Their spokesmen know how to make their entrance as "wise Indians" on the how-to-save-the-world stage, but they refuse to play passively the White man's Indian. Instead they criticize or even make use of the images in order to discuss important issues in Canadian society concerning life on the reserves and the Mi'kmaq future. They had in the past, and could have in the future, other demands on society than the Western image allows them to have.

The "Lone Ethnographer's labors" revisited

Finally, I would like to return to and reconnect with my earlier described model of the scholar's role in writing history or the fieldworker's way of experiencing other lifeworlds. A thesis is an academic project and an important scholarly contribution in attempting to cope with scientific methods and

theories. But there is always a risk that the scholars' own cultural models and personal experiences will influence and determine how they interpret and structure the material they find in the historical sources or what events they put down on paper as field notes. Even if, as a scholar, I try to detach myself in my work from the studied "object" to find out the scientific "truth", I am always situated in the world, not primarily as a scholar but as a human being. Being-in-the-field made me engage with the Mi'kmaq people and their life-world, and that has, of course, affected my results. A keen-eyed and critical reader could thus probably also do what I have done *vis-à-vis* other scholars' texts, namely reveal how this author has let the text express her own heart's desire.


Miles
0 5 10 15
0 5 10 15 20
Kilometres
Cape Breton
Cape North
Cape Smokey
Kluskap's Cave
St. Ann's
Bird Islands
Cape Dauphin
Whycocomagh
Nyansa
Kelly's Mountain
Eskasoni
Bras d'Or Lake
Sydney
St. Peters
Chapel Island


New
Brunswick
Edward
Island
Bay of Fundy
Cape
Chignecto
Spencers Island
Cape d'Or
Parrsboro
Cape Split
Five Islands
Cape Blomidon
Minas Basin
Pictou
Port Royal
Nova Scotia
Halifax
0 10 20 30
Km

REFERENCES

Anderson, B. 1983. *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* London: Verso.

Anderson, E. N. 1996. *Ecologies of the Heart. Emotion, Belief, and the Environment.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Andrews, T. D. 1990. *Yamoria's Arrows: Stories, Place-names and the Land in Dene Oral Tradition*, pp. 1-39. Yellowknife, NWT: For National Historic Parks and Sites. Northern Initiatives Canadian Parks Service Environment Canada.

Bailey, A. G. 1937. *The Conflict of European and Eastern Algonkian Cultures 1504-1700.* Saint John, New Brunswick: Publications of the New Brunswick Museum.

Barth, F. ed., 1969. *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Difference*. Boston: Little, Brown.

Bascom, W. 1984. "The Forms of Folklore: Prose Narratives". In N. A. Dundes, ed., *Sacred Narratives. Readings in the Theory of Myth*, pp. 5-29. California: University of California Press.

Bear Heart & M. Larkin. 1996. *The Wind is My Mother*. Swedish translation: *Vinden är min mor*. New York: Egmont Richter.

Benktson, B-E. 1971. *Varat och tiden. Introduktion till Martin Heidegger: Sein und Zeit*. Lund: CWK Gleerup.

Berkhofer, R. 1978. *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present.* New York: Knopf.

Beronius, M. 1986. *Den disciplinära maktens organisering: om makt och arbetsorganisation.* Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Bertolino, D. & D. Bertolino. 1982. *Indian Legends of Canada: "Glooscap Country."* Video.

Biard, P.1616/1959. *Relation de la Nouvelle France.* English translation: 1959 in Thwaites ed., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents III.* New York; Pageant Book.

Biggar, H. P. 1911. *The Precursors of Jacques Cartier 1497-1534. A Collection of Documents relating to the Early History of the Dominion of Canada.* Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau.

Birch, C., W. Eakin & J. B. McDaniel ed., 1990. *Liberating Life. Contemporary Approaches to Ecological Theology*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.

Bird-David, N. 1992a. " 'The Original Affluent Society': beyond Sahlins' seminal essay on hunter-gather's economics." In *Current Anthropology* 33, pp. 25-47.

------ 1992b. "Beyond 'the hunting and gathering mode of subsistence': culture-sensitive observations on the Nayaka and other modern hunter-gatherers". In *Man* (N.S.) 27, pp. 19-44.

------ 1993. "Tribal metaphorization of human-nature relatedness. A comparative analysis." In K. Milton ed., *Environmentalism. The view from anthropology*, pp. 112-125. London: Routledge.

------ 1999. " 'Animism' Revisited. Personhood, Environment, and Relational Epistemology." In *Current Anthropology* vol. 40, Feb. pp. 67-79.

Bock, P. K. 1966. *The Micmac Indians of Restigouche: History and Contemporary Description*. Ottawa: National Museum of Canada.

------ 1987. "Micmac" In M. Eliade ed., *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, pp. 109-122. New York: Macmillan.

Bourdieu, P. 1990. *The Logic of Practice.* Oxford: Polity Press.

Bouissac, P. 1989. "What is a human? Ecological semiotics and the new animism." In *Semiotica* 77-4, pp. 497-516.

Buber, M. 1923/1994. *Ich und Du*. English translation 1994: *I and Thou.* Edinburgh: T & T Clark LTD.

Burch Jr., E. S. 1994. "The Future of Hunter-Gatherer Research." In E. S. Burch Jr. and L. J. Ellanna ed., *Key Issues in Hunter-Gatherer Research*, pp. 441-455. Oxford: Berg.

Callicott, J. B. 1994. *Earth's Insights. A Multicultural Survey of Ecological Ethics from the Mediterranean Basin to the Australian Outback.* London: University of California Press.

Carmichael, D. L., J. Hubert, B. Reeves & A. Schanche ed. 1994. *Sacred Sites, Sacred Places.* London: Routledge.

Chute, J. E. 1992. "Ceremony, Social Revitalization and Change: Micmac Leadership and the Annual Festival of St. Anne." In W. Cowan ed., *Papers of the Twenty-third Algonquian Conference,* pp. 45-62. Ottawa: Carleton University.

Clifford, J. 1988. *The Predicament of Culture.* Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Cohn, B. S. 1980. "History and Anthropology: The State of Play." In *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 22: 2 (April), pp. 198-221.

Comaroff, J. & J. Comaroff 1993. *Modernity and its Malcontents: Ritual and Power in Postcolonial Africa*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Cooper, T. 1990. *Green Christianity. Caring for the whole creation*. London: Spire.

Crapanzano, V. 1980. *Tuhami*. Chigaco: The University of Chicago Press.

Cronon, W. 1983. *Changes in the Land. Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England.* New York: Hill and Wang.

Dalby, S. 1999. "Globalization and the natural environment: Geopolitics, culture and resistance." Draft paper for presentation to the International Roundtable on the Challenges of Globalization, University of Munich, March 1999.

Davis, S. A. 1992. *Micmac*. Tantallon, Nova Scotia: Four East Publications.

Davis, S. A. & B. Preston, ed., 1993. *Curatorial Report Number 77: Archaeology in Nova Scotia 1989 and 1990*. Nova Scotia Museum: Department of Education.

Dennis, C. 1934. *Down in Nova Scotia. My Own, My Native Land.* Toronto: The Ryerson Press.

Denys, N. 1672/1908. *Histoire naturelle des peuples, des animaux, des arbres & plantes de l'Amerique septentrionale & de ses divers climats.* English translation by Champlain Society 1908: *Concerning the ways of the Indians (their customs, dress, methods of hunting and fishing, and their amusements.*) The Nova Scotia Museum.

Denys, N. 1672/1995. *The Native People of Acadia.* Retold in the English of the Time with Comparative Notes by Ian Maxwell. Nova Scotia: The Little Daisy Press.

Descola P. & G. Pàlsson ed., 1996. *Nature and Society. Anthropological Perspectives*. London and New York: Routledge.

Dièreville, Le Sieur. 1708/1933. *Relation du Voyage du Port Royal de L'Acadie, ou de la Nouvelle France.* English translation 1933: *Relation of the Voyage to Port Royal in Acadie or New France,* in J. C. Webster, ed. Toronto: The Champlain Society Publications.

Eastman, C. A. 1911. *The Soul of the Indian: An Interpretation*. Reprinted 1971 ed., New York: Johnson Reprint Company, 1971.

Ekholm Friedman, K. 1998. *Trubbel i paradiset. Hawaiianernas återkomst.* Stockholm: Carlssons.

Elder, W. 1871. "The Aborigines of Nova Scotia." In *North American Review* 112, pp. 1-30.

Eliade, M. 1957/1987. *The Sacred and the Profane.* London: Harcourt Brace & Company.

Encyclopedia Canadiana. The Encyclopedia of Canada. 1958. Ottawa: The Canadiana Company Limited.

Erasmus, G. 1989. “Twenty Years of Disappointed Hopes.” In B. Richardson ed., *Drumbeat. Anger and Renewal in Indian Country*, pp. 1-41. Ontario: Summerhill Press.

Erickson, V. O. 1978. “The Micmac Buoin. Three Centuries of Cultural and Semantic Change.” In *Man in the Northeast* no. 15-16, pp. 3-41.

Evans-Pritchard, E. E. 1937. *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic Among the Azande*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Evernden, N. 1985/1993. *A Natural Alien*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Fauset, A. H. 1925. “Folklore from the Half-breeds in Nova Scotia.” In *Journal of American Folklore* no. 38, pp. 300-313.

Finnegan, R. 1991. “Tradition, But What Tradition and For Whom?” In *Oral Tradition* 6/1, pp. 104-124.

Fisher, M. 1946. “The Mythology of the Northern and Northeastern Algonkians in Reference to Algonkian Mythology.” In F. Johnson, ed., *Man in Northeastern North America*. PPFA 3, pp. 226-262.

Foucault, M. 1966/1970. *Le Mots et les choses.* English translation 1970: *The Order of Things. An Archaeology of the Human Sciences.* London: Tavistock Publications.

------ 1971/1993 *L’ordre du discours*. Swedish translation 1993: *Diskursens ordning*. Stockholm: Symposion.

------ 1986. “Of Other Places.” In *Diacritics*, Spring, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 22-27.

Francis, D. 1992. *The Imaginary Indian. The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture.* Vancouver: Pulp Press.

Friedman, J. 1994. *Cultural Identity and Global Process*. London: Sage.

Gadamer, H-G. 1960/1975. *Wahrheit und Methode*. Tübingen. English translation 1975: Truth and Method.

Geertz, A. 1992. *The Invention of Prophecy*. *Continuity and Meaning in Hopi Indian Religion.* Aarhus: Special Danish edition by agreement with the University of California Press, Los Angeles.

Geertz, C. 1983. *Local Knowledge. Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology.* New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers.

Gibbal, J-M. 1988/1994. *Les génies du fleuve: Voyage sur le Niger.* English translation 1994: *Genii of the River Niger.* Chigaco: Chicago Press.

Gibson, G. D. 1939. *Jesuit Education of the Indians in New France, 1611-1658.* Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation. Berkley: University of California.

Gibson, J. J. 1979. *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Gill, S. D. 1982. *Native American Religions. An Introduction.* California: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

------ 1987. *Mother Earth: An American Story.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gill, S. D. & I. F. Sullivan. 1992. *Dictionary of Native American Mythology.* California: ABC-CLIO.

Gonzalez, E. B. 1981. *Changing Economic Roles for Micmac Men and Women: An Ethnohistorical Analysis.* Ottawa: National Museum of Canada.

Gottlieb, R. S. 1996. *This Sacred Earth. Religion, Nature, Environment.* London: Routledge.

Gow, P. 1995. "Land, People, and Paper in Western Amazonia." In Hirsch & O'Hanlon *The Anthropology of Landscape. Perspectives on Place and Space*, pp. 43-62. New York: Oxford University Press.

Green, M. 1995. "Cultural Identities: Challenges for the Twenty-First Century." In Green, ed., *Issues in Native American Cultural Identity*, pp. 1-38. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.

Grinde, D. A. Jr. 1995. "Historical Narratives of Nationhood and the Semiotic Construction of Social Identity: A Native American Perspective." In M. Green, ed., *Issues in Native American Cultural Identity*, pp. 201-222. New York: Pete Lang Publishing, Inc.

Gross, F. 1971. "Indian Island: A Micmac Reserve." In J. L. Elliott, ed., *Native Peoples*, pp. 89-98. Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice Hall of Canada, Ltd.

Hagar, S. 1895. "Micmac Customs and Traditions." In *American Anthropologist* vol. VIII, Jan. pp. 31-42.

------ 1896. "Micmac Magic and Medicine." In *Journal of American Folklore* vol. 9, pp. 170-177.

------ 1897. "Weather and the Seasons in Micmac Mythology." In *Journal of American Folklore*, vol. 10, pp. 101-105.

Hallman, D. G., ed. 1994. *Ecotheology. Voices from South and North*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.

Hallowell, A. I. 1926. "Bear Ceremonialism in the Northern Hemisphere." In *American Anthropologist* 28, no. 1, pp. 1-175.

------ 1960. "Ojibwa Ontology, Behavior, and World View." In S. Diamond ed., *Culture in History: Essays in Honor of Paul Radin*, pp. 19-52. New York: Columbia University Press.

Handler R. & J. Linnekin. 1984. “Tradition, Genuine or Spurious.” In *Journal of American Folklore* no. 97, pp. 273-290.

Hanington, J. B. 1984. *Every Popish Person. The Story of Roman Catholicism in Nova Scotia and the Church of Halifax.* Nova Scotia: Archdiocese of Halifax.

Harrison, R. P. 1996. “From Forest: The Shadow of Civilization.” In R. S. Gottlieb, ed., *This Sacred Earth. Religion, Nature, Environment*, pp. 63-66. London: Routledge.

Harrod, H. 2000. *The Animals Came Dancing. Native American Sacred Ecology and Animal Kinship.* Arizona: The University of Arizona Press.

Hewitt, H. 1908. “Customs of the Micmac Indians.” Ms. Halifax Nova Scotia Historical Society Files.

Hewson J. 1991. “The MS Micmac prayer book (1759) of Father Maillard.” Paper presented at the Fifteenth Annual Meeting of the Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association.

Hewson, J. & B. Francis. 1990. *The Micmac Grammar of Father Pacifique.* Manitoba: Algonquian and Iroquoian Linguistics.

Hill, K. 1963. *Glooscap and His Magic: Legends of the Wabanaki People.*Toronto: McClelland and Stewart.

------ 1965. *Badger the Mischief Maker.* Toronto: McClelland and Stewart.

------ 1970. *More Glooscap Stories. Legends of the Wabanaki Indians.* Toronto: McClelland and Stewart.

Hobsbawn, E. J. & T. Ranger, ed. 1983. *The Invention of Tradition.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hoffman, B. G. 1946. *The Historical Ethnography of the Micmac of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries.* University of California: Dissertation.

Hornborg, Alf 1994. “Environmentalism, Ethnicity and Sacred Places: Reflections on Modernity, Discourse and Power.” In *Canad. Rev. Soc. & Anth. 31 (3*), pp. 245-267.

------ 1995. “Att få tala som en hövding: Om framväxten av en ny självbild hos mikmak.” In M. Kurkiala & H. Moksnes, ed., *Den obrutna cirkeln: Motstånd och överlevnad bland Amerikas indianer*, pp. 157-183. Stockholm: Carlssons bokförlag.

------ 1998a. “Miljöhistoria, humanekologi och ekologisk antropologi. Skillnader och konvergenser.” In M. Johansson ed., *Miljöhistoria idag och imorgon. Rapport från en miljöhistorisk konferens vid högskolan i Karlstad 9-10 April 1997*, pp. 105-123. Karlstad: Författarna och Högskolan i Karlstad.

------ 1998b. “The Mi’kmaq of Nova Scotia: Environmentalism, Ethnicity and Sacred Places.” In Alf Hornborg & M. Kurkiala ed. *Voices of the Land: Identity and Ecology in the Margins*, pp. 135-172. Lund: Lund University Press.

------ 1998c. “Mi’kmaq Environmentalism. Local Incentives and Global Projections.” In L. A. Sandberg & S. Sörlin ed. *Sustainability the Challenge. People, Power, and the Environment*, pp. 202-211. London: Blackrose Books.

Horton, R. 1964. “Ritual man in Africa.” In *Africa* XXXIV, pp. 85-104.

Howard, J. H. 1965. “St. Anne’s Day Celebration of the Micmac Indians 1962.” In *Museum News*, South Dakota Museum vol. 26, March-April, pp. 5-13.

Hubert, J. 1994. “Sacred beliefs and beliefs of sacredness.” In D. L. Carmicheal, J. Hubert, B. Reeves & A. Schanke ed. *Sacred Sites, Sacred Places*, pp. 9-19. London: Routledge.

Hughes, J. D. 1983/1996. *North American Indian Ecology*. Texas: Texas Western Press.

Hultkrantz, Å. 1961. “The Owner of the Animals in the Religion of the North American Indians: Some General Remarks.” In *Stockholm Studies in Comp. Rel.*, vol. 1, pp. 53-64.

------ 1967. *De amerikanska indianernas religioner*. Stockholm: Bonniers.

------ 1971. “The Structure of Theistic Beliefs among North American Plains Indians.” In *Temenos*, vol. 7, pp. 66-74.

------ 1981. *Belief and Worship in Native North America*. Edited, with an Introduction, by Christopher Vecsey. New York: Syracuse University Press.

------ 1985. “Some Critical Reflections on the Ecology of Religions.” In *Temenos*, vol. 21, pp. 83-90.

Hutton, E. 1961. *The Micmac Indians of Nova Scotia to 1834*. Dalhousie University.

Iggers, G. G. 1997. *Historiography in the Twentieth Century. From Scientific Objectivity to the Postmodern Challenge*. New England: Wesleyan University Press.

Ingold, T. 1986. *The Appropriation of Nature. Essays on Human Ecology and Social Relations*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

------ 1988. Ed., *What is an Animal?* London: Unwin Hyman.

------ 1994. “From trust to domination: An alternative history of human-animal relations.” In A. Manning & J. Serpell ed., *Animals and Human Society. Changing Perspectives*, pp. 1-21. London and NewYork: Routledge.

------ 1996. “Hunting and Gathering as Ways of Perceiving the Environment.” In R. Ellen & K. Fukui *Redefining Nature. Ecology, Culture and Domestication*, pp. 117-155. Oxford: Berg.

------ 2000. *The Perception of the Environment. Essays in livelihood, dwelling and skill.* London and New York: Routledge.

Jack, E. 1895. "Maliseet Legends." In *Journal of American Folklore* no. 8, pp. 193-208.

Jackson, M. 1989. *Paths Toward a Clearing: Radical Empiricism and Ethnographic Inquiry.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Jaenen, C. J. 1974. "American Views of French Culture in the Seventeenth Century". In *The Canadian Historical Review*, vol. LV no. 3, pp. 261-291. Toronto Press.

------ 1976. *Friend and Foe. Aspects of French-Amerindian Cultural Contact in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries.* New York: Columbia University Press.

------ 1987. "Thoughts on Early Canadian Contact." In C. Martin, ed., *The American Indian and the Problem of History*, pp. 55-66. Oxford: University Press.

Jaimes, M. A. 1995. "Native American Identity and Survival: Indigenism and Environmental Ethics." In M. Green ed., *Issues in Native American Cultural Identity*, pp. 273-296. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.

Jauss, H. R. 1982. *Ästhetische Erfahrung und literarische Hermeneutik.* Frankfurt.

(The) *Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents.* 1959. R.G. Twaites ed., New York: Pageant Book.

Joe, R. 1978. *Poems of Rita Joe.* Abanaki Press.

------ 1988/1991. *Song of Eskasoni*. Charlottetown, P. E. I.: Ragweed Press.

------ 1991. *Lnu and Indians We're Called.* Charlottetown, P. E. I.: Ragweed Press.

------ 1996. *Song of Rita Joe. Autobiography of a Mi'kmaq Poet.* Charlottetown, P. E. I.: Ragweed Press.

Johnson, E. 1991. "Mi'kmaq Tribal Consciousness in the 20th Century." In S. Inglis, J. Manette & S. Sulewski *Paqtatek*, pp. 23-31. Nova Scotia: Garamond Press.

Johnson, F. 1943. "Notes on Micmac Shamanism." In *Primitive Man* 16, pp. 53-80.

Johnston, A. A. 1960. *A History of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nova Scotia. Volume I: 1611-1827*. Nova Scotia, Antigonish: St. Francis Xavier University Press.

Jones, W. 1905. "The Algonkin Manitou." In *Journal of American Folk-Lore,* no. 18, pp. 183-190.

Joyce, J. 1922. *Ulysses*. New ed., 1960. London: Bodley Head.

Kearney, M. 1984. *World View*. California: Chandler & Sharp Publications.

Kennedy, J. H. 1950. *Jesuit and Savage in New France*. New Hawen: Yale University Press.

Knockwood, I. 1992. *Out of the Depths. The Experience of Mi'kmaw Children at the Indian Residential School at Shubenacadie, Nova Scotia.* Nova Scotia: Roseway Publishing.

Krech III, S. 1999. *The Ecological Indian. Myth and History*. New York: Norton.

Kurkiala, M. 1995. " 'Andarna kan aldrig dö.' Sekler av motstånd hos lakota." In M. Kurkiala & Heide Moksnes ed., *Den obrutna cirkeln. Motstånd och överlevnad bland Amerikas Indianer,* pp. 123-156. Stockholm: Carlssons bokförlag.

------ 1997. "*Building the Nation Back Up.*" *The Politics of Identity on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.* Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis.

Lacey, L. 1977. *Micmac Indian Medicine: A Traditional Way of Health.* Antigonish, Nova Scotia: Published and Distributed by Formac Limited Antigonish Shopping Mall.

Larsen, T. 1983. "Negotiating Identity: The Micmac of Nova Scotia." In A. Tanner, ed., *The Politics of Indianness*, pp. 37-136. Case studies of Native Ethnopolitics in Canada, St. John's: Memorial University of Newfoundland.

Larsson, M. 1999. *Vinland det goda. Nordbornas färder till Amerika under vikingatiden.* Stockholm: Atlantis.

Layton, R. 1995. "Relating to the Country in the Western Desert." In Hirsch E. & M. O'Hanlon ed., *The Anthropology of Landscape. Perspectives on Place and Space,* pp. 210-231. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Leavitt, R. M. 1985/1993. *The Micmacs.* Canada: Fitzhenry & Whiteside.

Le Clercq, C. 1691/1968. *Nouvelle Relation de la Gaspesie*[...]. English translation 1968 *New Relation of Gaspesia.* New York: Greenwood Press.

Leland, C. G. 1884. *The Algonquin Legends of New England or Myths and Folk Lore of the Micmac, Passamaquoddy, and Penobscot Tribes.* London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington.

Leland, C. G. & J. D. Prince. 1902. *Kulóskap the Master: And Other Algonkin Poems.* New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company.

Lenhart, J. 1932/1976. *History Relating to Manual Prayers, Instructions, Psalms and Hymns in Micmac Ideograms Used by Micmac Indians of Eastern Canada and Newfoundland.* Sydney, Nova Scotia: Nova Scotia Native Communications Society.

Lescarbot, M. 1609/1928. *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*. English translation 1928: *Nova Scotia. A Description of Acadia, 1606.* London: Routledge & Sons.

Levi-Strauss, C. 1962/1971. *La pensée sauvage.* Swedish translation: *Det vilda tänkandet*. Stockholm: Bonnier.

Lovelock, J. 1979. *Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Maillard, P. 1758. *Nouvelle Relation de le Gaspesie* [...]. Engelsk översättning: *New Relation of Gaspesia.* New York: Greenwood Press.

Marshall, M. 1991. "Introduction". In S. Inglis, J. Manette & S. Sulewski *Paqtatek*, pp. 17-19. Nova Scotia: Garamond Press.

Martin, C. 1978. *Keepers of the Game. Indian-Animal Relationships and the Fur Trade.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

------ 1987. "The Metaphysics of Writing Indian-White History." In C. Martin ed., *The American Indian and the Problem of History*, pp. 27-44.

------ 1992. *In the Spirit of the Earth. Rethinking History and Time.* London: The John Hopkins University Press.

------ 1993. "Micmacs and French in the Northeast." In C. Merchant, ed., *Major Problems in American Environmental History*, pp. 54-63. D. C. Heath & Co.

------ 1999. *The Way of the Human Being*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Mason, J. A. 1957/1969. *The Ancient Civilizations of Peru*. England. Penguin Books.

Matthiessen, P. 1980/1991. *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse.* New York: Viking Penguin.

McGee, H. F. Jr. 1974. *Ethnic Boundaries and Strategies of Ethnic Interaction: A History of Micmac-White Relations in Nova Scotia.* Southern Illinois University: Dissertation.

------ ed., 1983. *The Native Peoples of Atlantic Canada: A History of Indian-European Relations.* Ottawa: Carlton University Press.

Medick, H. 1987. " 'Missionaries in the Row Boat'? Ethnological Ways of Knowing as a Challenge to Social History." In *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 29, no. 1, Jan., pp. 76-98. Cambridge University Press.

Merchant, C. 1980/1994. *The Death of Nature. Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution.* Swedish translation 1994: *Naturens död. Kvinnan, ekologin och den vetenskapliga evolutionen.* Stockholm: Symposion.

------ 1989. *Ecological Revolutions. Nature, Gender and Science in New England.* London: The University of North Carolina Press.

------ 1992. *Radical Ecology. The Search for a Livable World.* New York: Routledge.

Merleau-Ponty, M. 1962. *Phenomenology of Perception*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Michelson, T. 1925. "Micmac Tales." In *Journal of American Folklore* no. 38, pp. 33-54.

Micmac Association of Cultural Studies. 1983. *Micmac Hymnal*.

Miller, J.R. 1989. *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens. A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Moberg, V. 1949-1959. *Utvandrarna* (1949), *Invandrarna* (1952), *Nybyggarna* (1956), *Sista brevet till Sverige* (1959). Stockholm: Bonniers.

------ 1963. *Din stund på jorden*. Stockholm: Bonniers.

Mohs, G. 1994. "Sto:lo sacred grounds." In D. L. Carmichael, J. Hubert, B. Reeves & A. Schanke ed. *Sacred Sites, Sacred Places*, pp. 184-208. London: Routledge.

Moore, D. E. 1983. *Micmac Culture and the Multiculturalism Policy.* Nova Scotia: Saint Mary's University.

Morrison, A. H. 1976. "Glooskap (1971), Glooscap Country (1962)." In *American Anthropologist*, vol. 78, no. 4, Dec., pp. 957-958.

Nabokov, P. ed. 1978/1991. *Native American Testimony: A Chronicle of Indian-White Relations from Prophecy to the Present 1492-1992.* New York: Penguin Books.

Naess, A. 1972. "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement." In *Inquiry*, 16, pp. 95-100.

Nasr, S.H. 1993. "Sacred Science and the Environmental Crisis: An Islamic Perspective." In *The Need for a Sacred Science*, pp. 129-147. Curzon Press.

Native Council of Nova Scotia 1997. *Mi'kmaw Resource Guide*. Truro: Eastern Woodland Publishing.

Newsome, A. E. 1980. "The Eco-Mythology of the Red Kangaroo in Central Australia". In *Mankind*, 12:4, pp. 327-333.

Nova Scotia Department of the Environment. 1991 18/5. *Environmental Assessment Report. Final Guidelines for the Preparation of Terms of Reference.*

Nova Scotia Economic Renewal Agency. 1996. *Nova Scotia, the Doer's and Dreamer's Complete Guide.* 1996 Edition.

Olsson, T. 1983. "The Apocalyptic Activity. The Case of Jamasp Namag." In D. Hellbom ed., *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East*, pp. 21-51. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck).

------ 1999. "Verbal Representation of Religious Beliefs: A Dilemma in the Phenomenology of Religions" In E. Sand & J. Podemann Sörensen *Comparative*

Studies in History of Religions: Their Aim, Scope, and Validity, pp. 75-92. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press.

(The Concise*) Oxford Dictonary of Current English*. 1990, eight edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Pacifique, F. 1921. *Manual of Prayers, Instructions, Psalms, and Hymns in Micmac Ideograms. Restigouche*, P.Q.: The Micmac Messenger.

Park, C. C. 1994. *Sacred Words. An Introduction to Geography and Religion.* London: Routledge.

Parkhill, T. 1997. *Weaving Ourselves into the Land. Charles Godfrey Leland, "Indians," and the Study of Native American Religions.* New York: State University of New York Press.

Parsons, E. 1925. "Micmac Folklore." In *The Journal of American Folklore*, no. 38, pp. 55-133.

------ 1926. "Micmac Notes." In *The Journal of American Folklore,* no. 39, pp. 460-485.

Paul, D. N. 1993. *We were not the Savages: A Micmac Perspective on the Collision of European and Aboriginal Civilisation.* Halifax, Nova Scotia: Nimbus.

Perry, M. 1962. *Glooscap Country.* Movie produced and directed by Margaret Perry. National Film Board of Canada.

Pettersson, O. 1972. *Tro och rit.* Stockholm: Almqvist och Wiksell.

Petrone, P. 1990. *Native Literature in Canada. From the Oral Tradition to the Present.* Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Pierpoint, H. 1971. *Glooscap.* Movie directed by H. Pierpoint. American Folklore Series.

Porterfield, A. 1990. "American Indian Spirituality as a Countercultural Movement." In C. Vecsey ed., *Religion in Native North America*, pp. 152-164. Idaho: University of Idaho Press.

Powers, W. 1975/1982. *Oglala Religion*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Prince, J. D. 1902. "Introduction". In C. G. Leland & J. D. Prince ed. *Kulóskap the Master: And Other Algonkin Poems*. New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company.

Prins, H. E. L. 1994. "Neo-Traditions in Native Communities. Sweat Lodge and Sun Dance Among the Micmac Today." In W. Cronon ed. *Actes du Vingt-Cinquème Congrès des Algonquinestes*, pp. 383-395. Ottawa: Carleton University.

------ 1996. *The Mi'kmaq: Resistance, Accommodation, and Cultural Survival*. USA: Harcourt Brace & Company.

Radin, P. 1956. *The Trickster: A Study in American Indian Mythology*. New York: Schocken Books.

Ralstone, H. 1981. "Religions, public policy, and the education of Micmac Indians of Nova Scotia, 1605-1872." In *The Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, 18: 4, Nov., pp. 470-498.

Ramsey, J. 1977. "Bible in Western Indian Myths." In *Journal of American Folklore*, vol. 90, pp. 442-454.

Rand, S. T. 1850. *A Short Statement of Facts Relating to the History, Manners, Customs, Language, and Literature of the Micmac Tribe of Indians in Nova Scotia and P. E. Island*. Halifax: James Bowes & Son.

------ 1875. *A First Reading Book in the Micmac Language*. Halifax: Nova Scotia Printing Company.

------ 1888/1994. *English Micmac Dictonary. Dictionary of the Language of the Micmac Indians, who reside in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Cape Breton.* Ottawa: Laurier Publications.

------ 1894/1971. *Legends of the Micmacs*. New York: Longmans, Green, & Co.

------ 1919. *Micmac Placenames in the Maritime Provinces and Gaspe Peninsula.* Collected, arranged and indexed by W. M. P. Anderson. Ottawa: Printed at the Surveyor General's Office.

Rapoport, A. 1975. "Australian Aborigines and the Definition of Place." In P. Oliver ed., *Shelter, Sign and Symbol*, pp. 38-51. London: Barne & Jenkins.

Rappaport, R. A. 1999. *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Redfield, R. 1952. "The Primitive World View." In *American Philosophical Society Proceedings 96*, pp. 30-36.

Reid, J. 1995. *Myth, Symbol, and Colonial Encounter. British and Mi'kmaq in Acadia, 1700-1867.* Canada: University of Ottawa Press.

Relph, E. 1976. *Place and Placelessness.* London: Pion Limited.

Ricketts, M. L. 1966. "The North American Trickster." In *History of Religions*, vol. 5, pp. 327-350. The University of Chicago Press.

------ 1987. "North American Tricksters." In *Encyclopedia of Religion,* vol. 15, pp. 48-51. New York .

Richardson, B. 1989. Ed., *Drumbeat. Anger and Renewal in Indian Country.* Ontario: Summerhill Press.

Roosens, E. E. 1989/1991. *Creating Ethnicity*. Newbury Park: Sage.

Rosaldo, R. 1989/1993. *Culture and Truth*. London: Routledge.

Rydving, H. 1993. *The End of Drumtime. Religious Change among the Luli Saami, 1670s-1740s.* Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell.

Sahlins, M. 1972. *Stone Age Economics*. London: Tavistock.

------ 1985. *Islands of History*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Said, E. 1978/1993. *Orientalism.* Swedish translation: *Orientalism*. Stockholm: Ordfront.

Salisbury, N. 1987. "American Indians and American History." In C. Martin, ed., *The American Indians and the Problem of History*, pp. 46-54. Oxford: Oxford University.

Schmidt, D. L. & M. Marshall, ed., 1995. *Mi'kmaq Hieroglyphic Prayers. Reading in North America's First Indigenous Script.* Halifax, Nova Scotia: Nimbus.

Selden, R. & P. Widdowson. 1993. *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory.* New York: Harvester/Wheatsheaf.

Smith, C. L. 1977. *The Acadian Classics. Seventeenth Century Views of the Micmac Indians.* National Library of Ottawa: Unpublished thesis.

Speck, F. G. 1915. "Some Micmac Tales from Cape Breton Island." In *The Journal of American Folklore,* no. 28, pp. 59-69.

------ 1917. "Malecite Tales". In *Journal of American Folklore* no. 30, pp. 479-485.

------ 1922. *Beothuk and Micmac*. New York: Museum of the American Indian Heye Foundation.

------ 1935. "Penobscot Tales and Religious Beliefs." In *Journal of American Folklore* vol. 48, no. 187, pp. 1-86.

------ 1938/1939. "Aboriginal Conservators." In *Birdlore,* vol 40, pp. 258-261.

Spence, L. 1994. *Myths of the North American Indians.* New York: Gramercy Books.

Spivak, G. C. 1994. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" In P. Williams & L. Chrisman ed., *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory. A Reader,* pp. 90-107. Colombia: University Presses of California, Colombia and Princeton.

Spretnak, C. 1997. *The Resurgence of the Real: Body, Nature and Place in Hypermodern World.* Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley Publishing.

Struggling for Sustainable Development (Video). 1992. Producer: Joan Weeks. A Folkus Atlantic Production.

Suzuki, D. & P. Knudtson. 1992. *Wisdom of the Elders. Sacred Native Stories of Nature.* New York: Bantam Books.

Sweetser, M. F. 1883. *The Maritime Provinces: Handbook for Travellers; A Guide to the Chief Cities, Coasts, and Islands of the Maritimes Provinces of Canada,*

and to their Scenery and Historic Attractions; with the Gulf and River of St. Lawrence to Quebec and Montreal; also Newfoundland and the Labrador Coast. With Four Maps and Four Plans. 3rd ed. Boston: James Osgood and Company. 1890 seventh edition, revised and enlarged, Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company.

Tanner, A. 1979. *Bringing Home Animals: Religious Ideology and Mode of Production of the Mistassini Cree Hunters.* New York: St. Martin's Press.

------ 1983. Ed., "Introduction: Canadian Indians and the Politics of Dependency." In *The Politics of Indianness. Case Studies of Native Ethnopolitics in Canada*, pp. 1-32. New Foundland: Institute of Social and Economic Research Memorial University of New Foundland.

Theodoratus, D. J. & F. LaPena. 1994. "Wintu sacred geography of northern California." In D. L. Carmicheal, J. Hubert, B. Reeves & A. Schanke ed. *Sacred Sites, Sacred Places*, pp. 20-31. London: Routledge.

Thoreau, H. D. 1854. *Walden.* Swedish translation 1998: *Skogsliv vid Walden*. Stockholm: Wahlström och Widstrand.

Tuan, Y. F. 1976. "Geopiety. A Theme in Man's Attachment to Nature and to Place." In D. Lowenthal & M. Bowden, ed., *Geographies of the Mind: Essays in Historical Geosophy; In Honor of John Kirkland Wright*, pp. 11-39. New York: Oxford U.P.

Union of Nova Scotia Indians. 1991 18/4. *Submission of Union of Nova Scotia Indians on Final Guidelines.*

Upton, L. F. S. 1979. *Micmac and Colonists: Indian-White Relations in the Maritimes 1713-1867.* Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Vansina, J. 1985. *Oral Tradition as History*. Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press.

Vecsey, C. 1980. "American Indian Environmental Religions". In C. Vecsey & R. W. Venables ed., *American Indian Environment. Ecological Issues in Native American History*, pp. 1-37. New York: Syracuse University Press.

------ 1991. *Imagine Ourselves Richly. Mythic Narratives of North American Indians.* New York: Harper Collins.

Vecsey, C. & R. W. Venables. 1980. Ed., *American Indian Environment. Ecological Issues in Native American History.* New York: Syracuse University Press.

Veyne, P. 1983/1988. *Les Grecs ont-ils cru à leurs mythes?* English translation: *Did the Greeks Believe in Their Myths? An Essay on the Constitutive Imagination.* Chicago: Chicago Press.

Viveiros de Castro, E. 1999. "The Transformation of Objects into Subjects in Amerindian Ontologies." Paper held at a session, *Re-Animating Religion: A De-*

bate on the New Animism, at the 98th Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Chicago 17-21 Nov. 1999.

Wagner, R. 1975. *The Invention of Culture.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Wallace, A. F. C. 1956. "Acculturation: Revitalization Movements." In *American Anthropologist*, no. 58, pp. 264-281.

Wallis, W. D. & R. S. Wallis. 1953. "Culture Loss and Culture Change among the Micmac of the Maritime Provinces 1912-1950." In *Kroeber Anthropological Society Paper* 8-9, pp. 100-129.

------ 1955. *The Micmac Indians of Eastern Canada.* Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press.

Weyler, R. 1992. *Blood of the Land. The Government and Corporate War Against First Nations.* Philadelphia: New Society Publishers.

White, L. Jr. 1967. "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crises." In *Science*, vol. 155, 10/3, pp. 1203-1207.

Whitehead, R. H. 1988. *Stories from the Six Worlds.* Halifax: Nimbus.

------ 1991. *The Old Man Told Us.* Halifax: Nimbus

Whitt, L. A. 1995. "Indigenous Peoples and the Cultural Politics of Knowledge." In M. Green ed., *Issues in Native American Cultural Identity*, pp. 223-271. New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc.

Wilmer, F. 1993. *The Indigenous Voice in World Politics. Since Time Immemorial.* London: Sage Publications.

Wolf, E. R. 1982. *Europe and the People Without History*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Worster, D. 1977/1996. *Nature's Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas.* Swedish translation: *De ekologiska idéernas historia.* Stockholm: SNS Förlag.

York, G. 1989. *The Dispossessed: Life and Death in Native Canada.* Toronto, Canada: Lester and Orpen Dennys Ltd.

Pamphlet:

Save Kelly's Mountain: The battle of Kelly's Mountain.

Newspapers:

Atlantic Insight

Cape Breton Post

(The) Casket

Chronicle-Herald
Dagens Nyheter
Dala-Demokraten
Expressen
Fjärde Världen
(The) Globe and Mail
Harrowsmith
Independent
Indianbulletinen
Inverness Oran
MMMN - Micmac Maliseet Nations News
MN - Micmac News
Network News. Nova Scotia Environmental Network
New Maritimes
Samefolket
SIA- Skogindustriarbetaren
Stornoway Gazette and West Coast Advertizer
Sunday Times
Toronto Star

Internet:

http://conbio.rice.edu/nae/docs/grossman.html
http://elements/nb.ca/multim/sulian/sulian htm.
http://www.ednet.ns.ca/educ/museum/mikmaq/mikmaqsp.htm
http://www.fnen.org/
http://www.navajohopiobserver.com/news3. htm
http://www.nfb.ca/FMT/E/MSN/10/10895.html
http://www.web.net/~nben/envnews/media/99/mblo.htm