# Introduction: From Beavers to Land: Building on Past Debates to Unpack the Contemporary Entanglements of Algonquian Family Hunting Territories

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***Abstract:*** In 1986, *Anthropologica* published a special issue on Algonquian Family Hunting Territories (FHT) with diverse ethnographic research that overturned, grounded and reframed the earlier literature on the origins and the private-primitive communism property descriptions of Algonquian land tenure systems. The issue presented research developed with. for and in the emerging northern Indigenous political and legal struggles to continue to live on and govern their lands in the midst of rapid economic and state interventions. In this Introduction to the special issue, we provide a historical overview as well as a renewed framework for the analysis of Indigenous territoriality and governance which has been informed by the ways Algonquian peoples have continued to respond to the challenges they faced in the last thirty years. We describe the evolution of the Algonquian lives on the land and governance in the midst of resource exploitation and extraction, as well as important shifts within continually emerging Algonquian socialities.

***Résumé :*** En 1986, *Anthropologica* publiait un numéro spécial sur les territoires de chasse familiaux Algonquiens comportant diverses recherches ethnographiques qui renversaient, ancraient ou recadraient les travaux antérieurs portant sur les origines ou décrivant le communisme primitif des systèmes de propriété foncière Algonquiens. Le numéro présentait des recherches développées dans le cadre de la montée de revendications politiques et juridiques Autochtones pour le maintien de leur mode vie et de leur gouvernance territoriale alors que se multipliaient les interventions économiques et étatiques sur leurs terres. Dans cette Introduction au numéro thématique, nous présentons un aperçu historique ainsi qu'un nouveau cadre conceptuel pour analyser la territorialité et la gouvernance autochtones, informés par la manière dont les Algonquiens continuent de répondre aux défis auxquels ils font face depuis trente ans. Nous décrivons l'évolution de la gouvernance et des façons de vivre des Algonquiens parmi les initiatives d'extraction et d'exploitation des ressources sur leurs terres, ainsi que certaines transformations importantes au sein des socialités Algonquiennes.

Thirty years ago, the journal *Anthropologica* (Bishop and Morantz, 1986) published a landmark special issue on Algonquian[1] family hunting territories (FHT), an Indigenous land tenure regime first identified in the anthropological literature by Speck in 1915 and a subject of intense debates throughout the twentieth century. As a central question, the scholars editing that special issue wondered, "Who owns the Beaver?" a choice of words clearly pointing to the centrality of the fur trade in these debates, although beaver of course were also, and remain, an important food animal. At the time, and following recent publications in both ethnohistory (Morantz 1978) and anthropology (Tanner 1971; Feit 1982), this publication participated in changing the focus from the "classic debate" on the origins of the FHT institution – seen as a "narrow and simple issue" – to an investigation of "a variety of questions about the actual operation of hunting territories as a land tenure system in specific ethnographic and historic cases" (Tanner 1986, 22). In various ways, this 1986 publication was a turning point and saw the emergence of a different type of anthropological literature that progressively embraced the various aspects of land management for Algonquian peoples (especially the James Bay Cree). Our efforts in this renewed special issue clearly follow in that vein by taking into account the significant, and at times unsettling, changes that occurred on Algonquian lands as they entered the twenty-first century. If "renewal" of the debate may properly be spoken of, our current attempt is more to incorporate the latest changes happening on Algonquian lands, as well as the most recent anthropological perspectives, than to reopen old questions as such.[2] Building on the work of our predecessors, we will describe the multiple ways in which the FHT institution became a highly political matter, embedded in a wide range of activities – land claims negotiation, resource exploitation, redesigning of customary law, and socio-economic development – while remaining central to everyday hunting practices on the

land. In so doing, this issue will describe the role of the FHT as an institution in the midst of resource exploitation and important societal shifts, questioning the contemporary forms of these territories and their greater integration into the politics of development within the region.

## On the Limits of Anthropological Imagination

Among the various topics that have marked Canadian anthropology, the debate surrounding the Algonquian family hunting territories has occupied a prominent place. Ever since Speck's "discovery" (1915, 1923, 1927) and description (including Speck and Eiseley, 1939) of the family hunting territory as "a kinship group composed of folks united by blood or marriage, having the right to hunt, trap, and fish in a certain inherited district bounded by some rivers, lakes, or other natural landmarks" (Speck 1915, 290), much has been written about this land tenure regime. For decades, opposing camps fought over strongly held views (for a detailed account, see Morantz's contribution in this issue). It is well known that the debate went beyond the scope of Algonquian territorialities to address broader theoretical questions dear to Marxist and Boasian anthropologists, namely the evolution of human sociality and the history of the idea of property. While we want here to pose a brief retrospective, our interest is not in the details of each position and actors, abundantly described elsewhere (Pulla 2006, 2011; Tanner 1986; Morantz, this issue). Nonetheless, there is value in unpacking the role that anthropology as a discipline has played in understanding and describing Indigenous territorialities. From the contested evolutionist perspective of the early twentieth century, through such concepts as acculturation and assimilation, to contemporary notions of hybridity and entanglement, a captivating intellectual saga has unfolded. Our effort to describe this chronicle is thus a fertile way to take a critical look at our discipline.

We suggest a threefold characterisation of the intertwined and recurrent critiques that have been directed toward the original debate. First, important criticism condemned the exaggerated focus on the origins of the FHT and its relation to evolutionist theories. Indeed, up until the 1970s, "northern societies were considered primarily as providing evidence for or against specific hypotheses about social organization" (Cruikshank 1993, 135). As the Western scientific fabric was deeply embedded in this evolutionist perspective, anthropology's fascination with the question of the origins[3] of society limited discussions about Algonquian peoples' territorial practices and institutions – which were more varied and nuanced than reported – to ethnocentric, simplified and at times romantic portrayals. As a result, early anthropology – and settler society as a whole – was unable to grasp fully and describe these alternative ways of relating to the land. In the end, the focus on "the aboriginality question [was], in effect, a debate about the origins of an institution which we do not understand" (Tanner 1986, 23).[4] Though it may appear too easy to judge past anthropologists by today's criteria, one cannot deny that the discipline, as practised in this specific context, just did not have the tools, the concepts or the imagination to describe land tenures based on such different ontological premises.[5]

The second important critique, represented by several authors in the 1986 special issue, including Bishop, Tanner and Morantz, cites the problematic propensity to generalise from particular local cases to the Algonquian sociolinguistic family as a whole. As the debate hardened, authors sometimes extrapolated any piece of data proving their position to the entire Algonquian group, with, at times, little consideration for the important differences in the social, cultural or ecological contexts of each community.[6] One could also argue that the adversarial nature of the debate gave space to over-interpretation and tunnel vision. As a sign of such tendencies, FHT were being "discovered" all over the Canadian Indigenous world and even beyond.

Third and finally, we can point to the limits of the dichotomist nature of the debate. Most actors in the classic debate developed an "either-or" perspective, not allowing for further description of the grey zones. As such, the Algonquian FHT are either Aboriginal or emerging from the fur trade; either a form of communal property or a private one. This dichotomist perspective had deep consequences for our understanding of the sociocultural transformation these groups were going through. As Tanner noted, anthropologists tended to present non-Western peoples according to two opposite positions: "Either they are seen as following a special way of life based on local conditions and a distinctive culture, or, at the other extreme, portrayed as minorities who are dominated, shaped or have been absorbed by a larger colonial or industrial society" (Tanner 1983, 312). Anthropological inability to move beyond these "either-or" positions and think in terms of hybridity or complex entanglements (in other words, in an "and-and" or "neither-nor" perspective) produced questionable conclusions. As a later evolution of the debate, the work of Leacock motivated the emergence of theories phrased in terms of acculturation and assimilation. In their noteworthy paper on "tappers and trappers," Murphy and Steward (1956) insisted on the ongoing and inevitable

assimilation of band societies into industrial economies.[7] This perspective, denouncing the delinquency of Indigenous ways of life, was widespread among scholars working with Indigenous peoples in Canada up until the late sixties and was later fought against a new generation of anthropologists and Indigenous leaders alike (Cruikshank 1993, 135–136).

These three intertwined characteristics of the original debate surrounding the Algonquian FHT all point to a lack of fluidity and dynamics in the study of Indigenous tenures. At stake are the limits of past anthropologists to understand the social complexity that emerged from the colonial encounter in Canada. As history did not result in the disappearance or assimilation of Indigenous world views and hunting practices, new ethnographic data and theoretical perspectives shifted the focus toward an understanding of the resilience of the FHT as a central institution.

## The Ethnography of the Contemporary Family Hunting Territories

As stated above, a freshly trained generation of anthropologists working with Canadian Indigenous peoples took the stage during the last third of the twentieth century. These scholars renewed the corpus of ethnographic data available on the FHT, with a patently greater focus on the James Bay Cree. There is a series of events and reasons – as well as a good dose of coincidence – explaining this focus on the Cree. We will highlight three factors here.

First is Norman Chance's timely creation of the McGill-Cree Project in 1964.[8] As a new concern for the social development of Indigenous peoples emerged from the Hawthorn–Tremblay commission, the McGill-Cree Project's team of researchers[9] examined the economic, social and political change ongoing in the southern Cree communities. Taking initially an acculturation perspective, the project focused at first on the industrialisation of the Cree (Chance 1968),[10] not on territoriality or hunting practices. As such, the McGill-Cree Project did not generate the renewed interest in the FHT per se but created the context for it to emerge. Indeed, a new generation of anthropologists was trained there – some of them later focusing on territoriality – and the project created the impulse for partnerships between researchers at McGill University and the Cree, which became central in the decades to follow.

This brings us to the second and more significant reason for the sustained anthropological focus on the Cree: the James Bay Hydroelectric Project. Again, the project did not trigger academic interest in the FHT – Feit, Tanner and Preston all did their fieldwork before the announcement of the project – but provided relevance and durability to their research. The magnitude of this resource development project,[11] the suddenness of its announcement and the quickly organised response of the Cree (and the Inuit) generated broad academic support indeed.[12] Moreover, it turned the Cree FHT into a matter of public interest. Experts, alongside Cree hunters, testified about their existence in court, and the media grew curious about the relationship between the Cree and their lands (see Richardson 1975). Moreover, the signing of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) in 1975 and its foreseen consequences justified a sustained focus on the future of the Cree. This agreement and its enforcement also redefined the role of anthropologists (as experts and advocates) as they followed the Cree through complex and fast-paced socio-economic transformations, as well as through their struggle to have a say in the management and development of their lands.

A credible third reason for the predominance of the study of the Cree FHT is their quite noteworthy resilience. There are two explanations for this resilience. First, because of their relative remoteness, the Cree underwent less pressure and encroachment on their lands than southerner Algonquian groups throughout much of the fur trade and early industrial resource-extractive history. As a result, their hunting activities were still flourishing in the early 1970s (with some variation from one community to another). Second, the Cree FHT were strongly recognised, as they had been, for decades, progressively integrated into the bureaucratic fabric of resource management. As exhibited in details by Toby Morantz (2002), and discussed more recently by Scott and Morrison (2004, 2005), Harvey Feit (2005) and Susan Preston (2011), several waves of external intervention – the beaver preserves, the registered traplines and the JBNQA – participated in slowly turning the FHT into a more institutionalised and gradually more strictly mapped land tenure.[13] This process was surely not exempt from functional dissonance, as one could – and still can – observe a gap between these formal-looking maps and the fluidity and negotiable nature of everyday practices and cohabitation on the land. Nonetheless, this formalisation participated in the endurance and high visibility of this form of land tenure.

Encouraged at various levels by this context, four scholars have been at the forefront of the research on Cree hunting practices since the early seventies: Richard Preston, Adrian Tanner, Harvey Feit and Colin Scott.[14] While the first three did their fieldwork in the late sixties – respectively in Waskaganish, Mistissini, and Waswanipi – Scott began his research in Wemindji

approximatively a decade later. Their work was based on the assertion that the Cree FHT were not a response to the fur trade (or other external elements) but "a critical means of reconstituting the wide social relations and the basic symbolic meanings of Cree hunters" as well as "a major means of locally shaping the changes caused by increasing linkages to both nation states and markets" (Feit 1991a, 224). Their ethnographic data, while demonstrating continuity and geographic overlap with Speck's description, also revealed that the system was becoming more rigid and formalised (Tanner 1979; also observed in Craik and Casgrain 1986). Their analyses allowed for a "new recognition of the resilience of the social relations of communal hunting, which, in many cases, have withstood centuries of involvement with capitalist economic and political forms" (Scott 1986, 164). Through their work, a refined and more contemporary definition of the FHT emerged. According to Harvey Feit (1991a, 230),

> the key elements of the hunting territory system then are: a communal and inalienable interest in the use and protection of all land resources; the existence of a limited and relatively stable set of stewards, whose detailed knowledge of, and spiritual ties to, tracts of land are the basis of their authority over all intensive use of those lands and resources by community members; community expectation, sanction and encouragement of leaders to exercise authority with a view to protect communal and family needs, intergenerational continuity, and the needs of all for access to land.

Spanning several decades and still topical today, the work of these four scholars[15] produced an important literature and expounded on several key topics. First, they developed a considerably more nuanced perspective on the property debate, discussing the many possible variations of the system, as well as the vocabulary at play – "private property," "communal ownership," "stewardship," and "usufruct." In the 1986 special issue of *Anthropologica*, they expressed their critiques regarding the lack of precision of the original debate and agreed on the rejection of the idea of the FHT as private property.[16] While Tanner preferred the term "usufruct" to describe this land tenure, he pointed to the fact that the land per se "is not owned" and that the FHT are more efficiently described as "units of management" (1986). This is a position backed by several authors according to whom the "Cree do not see land as real estate" (Berkes 1986, 150), and the ownership relationship of stewards to their hunting territories "is not one of ownership by market standards" (Feit 1991a, 229; see also Nadasdy 2002). Two years later, Scott (1997 [1988]) summarised their arguments:

> To speak of Cree property, then – even "communal" property – would be to gloss over the essential dynamic of the system. Customary rights in the land, living resources and products may be specified, but these relate to the technical and political relations of managing and sharing resources – resources in which no one, in the last analysis, retains exclusive or absolute rights. (40)

In their effort to describe the territorial practices of the Cree – and this is the second point – these authors also highlighted the role of the hunting boss, also called the *tallyman* or *nituuhuu uuchimaau*. The focus on the many aspects of this central role in Cree society was a major evolution in the debate (which was not a debate anymore). By describing the "strong egalitarian ethic" upon which the tallyman's authority rests, they enriched our understanding of the FHT:

> By recognizing and fostering correct relations among "persons," the leader enjoys the authority to "decide." Vis-a-vis animal populations, this responsibility includes knowledge about how many animals should be harvested by the group and at what places and times, to maximize social benefit, while maintaining optimum ecological conditions. Vis-a-vis fellow human beings, this responsibility entails the generous sharing of opportunities to hunt. (Scott 1997, 38–39)

Third, by linking the ecological, social and symbolic aspects of the FHT, they reached what was lacking in the classic debate, namely a more holistic understanding. Their ethnographies encompassed descriptions of the complex social fabric of Cree hunting, including aspects that are not "put into words," as they are "embodied more in attitude and action than in conscious thought or reflection" (Preston 1986, 15). In particular, they described the spiritual nature of everyday hunting practices – what Tanner (1979, 108) called the "hunting religion"[17] – as an important feature of the FHT. Indeed, "the steward is said to have the closest ties to the spirits of the land he owns" (Feit 1991a, 229). These perspectives on the religious nature of hunting have lately been framed as the study of "ontology," following renewed debates in the anthropological discipline (Descola 2005; Ingold 2000; Scott 2013). It has thus been stressed that, in a world of "relational ontology" (Poirier 2017; Scott 2017), the animals give themselves willingly (but not gladly) to the respectful hunter, who consequently displays the proper attitude toward these other-than-human persons. In this regard, the ideas of

respect and sharing, so inherent to the FHT, are perceptible in various social interactions, be they in hunting practices or interaction with the settler society.

Indeed, while Cree society as a whole was undergoing major challenges following the implementation of the JBNQA, an important part of scholarly work involved describing the role played by the FHT in the changing political and socio-economic context. In contrast to past theories of acculturation, these analyses highlighted how, even under growing external pressure, the FHT were a place of resistance and affirmation of Cree cultural identity. While recognising the transformation of the Cree economy – increasing cash transfers, a boom in full-time job opportunities, and commodification of resources – scholarship demonstrated quite extensively the resilience, through the FHT, of the hunting ethics described above. Scott (1986, 170), for example, observes: "It does not appear that mere involvement with capitalist economies at the level of commodity production is a sufficient condition for the erosion of Indigenous systems of tenure or for the fundamental transformation of communal productive relations." Certainly, as time has passed, tensions over access to land and resources have been increasing and privatising impulses have become manifest; but at the same time "there are potentially effective means of resistance to the occasional efforts of a small number of stewards to enhance the monetization of invitations to use hunting territories" (Feit 1991a, 246). Even more, scholarship in this vein shows how maintaining the values of respect and sharing in hunting is a matter of political affirmation, the Cree highlighting that they do not hunt or trap the way white people do. Simultaneously, this anthropological analysis of the political and economic context has been influential in showing that not only was the Cree hunting system of rights and responsibilities resisting the imposition of a neoliberal frame, but it also rooted their political claims and actions. Indeed, according to Scott, "while Cree are achieving participation in wider worlds, they are doing so using some key Indigenous relations" (1984, 77). Feit went on to demonstrate that "hunting is not just a central activity of the Cree, nor is it simply a body of knowledge or a spiritual activity. Hunting is an ongoing experience of truth as power in the course of human lives and in the social world in which they are lived" (Feit 2004b, 106). According to him, the Cree notion of power is about reciprocity and respect between partners – the animals, the hunters, the governments and even the developers. While they fear disrespectful behaviours and the capacity of destruction of some industrial actors – a tendency they associate with the figure of Atuush, the self-interested, asocial and cannibal figure (Scott 1989; Feit 2000) – the Cree still seek partnership with the dominant Canadian society. Both authors pointed to the themes of sustained reciprocity and the inclusive nature of the Cree: following the example of animal generosity, they see it as their responsibility to share their lands and resources – a position that has created complex and growing entanglements, which will be the focus of this special issue.

Before considering more recent developments on the topic, let us describe the situation of the Crees' Algonquian neighbours. During these decades of ethnographic exploration of the Cree territoriality, what did we know of the Algonquian FHT south of Eeyou Istchee?[18] The truth is that academic research on the relationship between these Algonquian groups and their territories was significantly less voluminous for a period, and it was only after 2000 that a renewed ethnographic interest emerged. This situation can be partially explained by the more disruptive form of colonial violence and territorial encroachment these groups had to endure. Located south of the Cree, not only did their encounter with Euro-Canadians happen earlier, but they were more violently dispossessed of their lands, especially after the 1950s, as an unbridled forestry industry, together with mining and hydroelectric developments, forced them to radically alter or abandon their nomadic way of life (Poirier 2010). Unlike the Cree, whose claims were negotiated and partially recognised, their rights were systematically denied, and their claims remain largely unanswered to this day. As a result, and faced with various assimilationist efforts, they underwent a sharp decrease in hunting and trapping activities, and their everyday practices on the land were indubitably threatened. For these reasons, it is not surprising that most of the research on these groups was through the lens of history: from the early contact period (Clermont 1977; Viau 1995; Gélinas 2000; Chamberland et al. 2004) to their dispossession of lands (Leroux et al. 2004; Gélinas 2003), Catholic missionisation, and crises of residential schooling (Bousquet 2002, 2005, 2012). Nonetheless, even faced with such challenges, their relationship to the land endured, and they made important efforts to maintain the transmission of hunting practices, knowledge and values. Furthermore, these became an important social and political matter in their fight for rights and sovereignty.

It can further be noted that the interest in territoriality and land use partially shifted, during the last three decades of the twentieth century, from academic debates to applied research. Indeed, following the launching of the federal policy on Comprehensive Land Claims Agreements (1973),[19] both the Algonquin and the Atikamekw (as well as the Innu) worked with various teams of researchers to gather data regarding their historical

and contemporary land use.[20] What emerged from this data – as well as from a later wave of renewed research on territoriality[21] – is that much of what we described on the Cree FHT rings partially true for the Algonquins and the Atikamekw, even in the face of undermined subsistence practices. Indeed, collective stewardship of the land, ethics of reciprocity, and a spiritual relationship with the animals are inherent aspects of their territorial relations (Poirier 2001). Later describing the role of the hunting bosses (*ka nikaniwitc*), Ethier points to a series of rules and practices equivalent to what Scott or Feit described for the Cree: stewardship of resources, sharing of bush food to extended networks, a system of invitation to hunt on their lands, and non-coercive authority (Ethier 2014, 50–52). He goes on to describe how these practices are embedded in *nehirowisi pimatisiwin*, a way of life central for the upkeep of Atikamekw well-being, language and social structures.

Beyond these similarities, we must also highlight a significant difference in order to develop a nuanced portrait of variations in land tenure (and an appropriate comparison). We have already mentioned that the Cree FHT were relatively unique in their relationship with the conservation policies set up during the first half of the twentieth century. Indeed, on Cree lands, the creation of the registered traplines (an evolution of the beaver preserves) was based on the previously existing family hunting territories (Feit 2005, 275–276). As a result, even if the traplines brought their fair share of transformation, they did not impose an exogenous land tenure model. As Toby Morantz (2002) describes it, analysing Cooper (1939),

> a juxtaposition of John Cooper's map of Fort George hunting territories in 1932, made in the pre-beaver preserve era, with a 1977 map of registered trapping lines produced by the Crees show similar boundaries of these lands despite the passage of forty years and layers of outside interference in their subsistence strategies. Similarly, Adrian Tanner, researching hunting territories in Mistassini in the 1960s, saw continuity and overlap with those charted by Speck in the 1920s. What changed was the formal nature of the family hunting territories. What had before been customary and flexible according to family circumstances was now rigid and subject to disposition by the trader or government official. (172–173)

Despite these modifications, the overlapping that Morantz highlights here is at the heart of the uniqueness of the Cree family hunting territories. This overlapping is also demonstrated by the interchangeability of the various terms used by the Crees to describe their land tenure: *nituuhuu aschii*, hunting territory or trapline; *nituuhuu uuchimaau*, hunting boss or tallymen.

However, among the Algonquin, the Atikamekw and the Innu, history did not unfold in the same manner. Indeed, for particular reasons and depending on the benevolence of the conservation agent, the registered traplines were often not congruent with the pre-existing FHT. Even in Cree territory, as Scott and Morrison (2004, 2005) show, such imperatives as the administrative boundary between Quebec and Ontario could override the principal of recognising Indigenous boundaries. But the Algonquin, Atikamekw and Innu, while subject to "the same" administrative system of beaver preserves and registered traplines, were subject to many more extensive dislocations due to agricultural colonisation in the Abitibi and Lac-Saint-Jean districts, as well as earlier and more extensive hydroelectric, industrial forestry and mining projects and the incursion of sport hunting and fishing interests. The consequence is that today, for more southerly Algonquian peoples, the trapline system and the tallymen do not correspond to the traditional FHT and hunting boss model. On the one hand, the limits of the traplines rarely match the previous hunting territories and, on the other hand, there has been an imposition of territory "ownership" by individual adult males, rather than collective rights through the family heads. In some cases, the consequence is the disappearance of the FHT in favour of remotely administered traplines, with variable feelings of cultural dissonance. While the Barrière Lake Algonquins feel alienated from their system of territoriality (Pasternak 2013, 132–139), the Atibitibiwinik have accepted the pros and cons of this fixed tenure (Bousquet 2005, 68). Along the same lines, Leroux notes that for the people of Kitcisakik, the contemporary traplines (*lots de piégeage*) that he mapped in 1999, even if different from the previous FHT mapped by Davidson, are seen as a compromise in the face of territorial loss and demographic expansion (Leroux et al. 2004, 120–130). In the case of the Atikamekw, that historical process gave birth to yet another result, as it led to the coexistence of the two systems to the present day (Wyatt 2004). Indeed,

> the Atikamekw system of territorial organization should not be confused with the trapping lots as defined in the Beaver Preserve, which was established by the provincial government in 1951. Although lots were generally based on family territories (as interpreted by government officers at the time), they are not equivalent. Participants in this study usually referred to *natoho aski* and *natoho meskano*, rather than to the numbered trapping lots … This information shows that the Atikamekw continue to use their

> own system of territorial organization and that this system coexists with the forestry licenses and tenure systems established by the government. (Wyatt, 2004, 186)

These descriptions and various nuances in the contemporary cohabitation of tenure systems demonstrate that Algonquian FHT are entangled in various forms of territoriality that must be understood as such. The contemporary literature on the old debate invites us to examine these entanglements, and has framed the motivation for this special issue.

## The Complex Entanglements of Family Hunting Territories in the Twenty-First Century

We have deliberately not included in the previous analysis the most recent contributions on the Algonquian territoriality. Since the turn of the century, and particularly in the past ten years, it is our opinion that the study of the FHT has entered yet another phase. This phase is certainly not about breaking from the recent past, nor is it about opposing the aforementioned descriptions of the FHT. Rather, this new corpus builds on them to describe and debate the most recent changes occurring on the land. As such, the recent refinements on "entangled territorialities" are as much about changes at play in the Algonquian worlds as they are about new theoretical articulations. It is to both developments, as they created the impetus for this special issue, that this final chapter will attend.

For the Cree of Eeyou Istchee, the turn of the century was the stage of an important – and quite unexpected – turn of events. Indeed, after years of firm opposition to and refusal of any further hydroelectric development on their lands – a saga whose landmark event was the 1994 decision by the Quebec government to postpone *sine die* the Great Whale hydroelectric project – the Grand Council of the Cree announced in 2001 the signing of an agreement in principle with the provincial government and Hydro-Québec. This agreement would come to be known, after its final signing in February 2002, as the "Paix des Braves" (PDB). Stamped as a "nation-to-nation" partnership assuring the Cree $3.5 billion in guaranteed revenue over the next 50 years, this agreement also redefined their role in the industrial exploitation of their lands while consenting to the construction of a new hydroelectric complex on the Eastmain and Rupert Rivers. In addition, the PDB aimed at remedying some deficiencies of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement regarding forestry management – a sector perceived as out of control and a major source of tensions among the southern Cree communities. To summarise the spirit of the agreement, let us point out, after Feit, that "the growth of the Cree population has made nearly all Crees deeply concerned about finding ways to create employment for the growing number of youth who will not make hunting their central productive activity, although hunting does remain an important part of their collective lives" (2010, 74). It is no surprise that the PDB had important consequences for the family hunting territories and participated in redefining the role of the Cree tallymen, especially in the communities impacted by the new hydroelectric project – mainly Mistissini, Nemaska and Waskaganish – as well as in those affected by the new forestry regime – mostly Waswanipi, Oujé-Bougoumou and Mistissini. As the FHT are now used as a framework for organising land management, compensation, and employment and entrepreneurial opportunities with respect to the various economic activities resulting from industrial activities, numerous tallymen have seen their role redefined from hunters and family/community spokespersons to small-business managers and construction supervisors. While this diversification was not entirely new for them, it definitely took on new proportions. At the same time, tallymen and other senior hunters became consultants for social and environmental impact studies (see Nasr and Scott 2010) as well as the recipients of various mitigation projects. More than 15 years after the signing of the Paix des Braves, this special issue is a perfect opportunity to renew the description and analysis of the FHT in this challenging context. A partial shift of perspective seems to emerge. Indeed, attending to the changing role of the Cree tallymen, analysing the FHT as places of cultural resistance (as described above) no longer fully represents the complexities at stake. Harvey Feit (2010, 52) himself invites us to consider such a shift, observing that

> there are Indigenous projects that are not centered on opposing neoliberalism generally and do not seek to replace it transnationally. Nor do Indigenous peoples who develop engagements with neoliberal nation-states or markets necessarily accept neoliberalism as a vision or fail to see the less obvious effects it can have. These relationships present a challenge to analysis.

Before analysing the anthropological response to this challenge, let us describe the stakes – which are slightly different – that arose for the Atikamekw and the Algonquins during the same period, as described by a series of recent contributions (see endnote 21 for a full listing). In these cases, rather than the implementation of a signed agreement, what is at the centre of attention is the reaching of an agreement in the first

place. Indeed, as we have mentioned earlier, these two nations have been negotiating with governments for several decades now,[22] and the lives of their members have been sharply affected by the enduring process of land claims preparation and negotiation. Moreover, these negotiations put pressure on the FHT, as they are one of the keystones of the negotiation process. Not only are they at the centre of the required proofs of the historical and continuous use of these nations' lands (which can cause some tensions; see Bousquet 1999, 2005), but they also serve as the basis for their model of governance and management and are thus subjected to debates and redefinitions. In recent years, the Atikamekw have undertaken to reinforce the role and authority of their hunting bosses (*ka nikaniwitcik*) in order to develop their own decision-making structures regarding resource management (Ethier 2014). At stake is "describing the way the Nehirowisiwok see the contemporary role of the *ka nikaniwitc* (hunting boss) as well as understanding how co-management agreements between the State and First Nations could allow for an integration of traditional institutions such as the *ka nikaniwitc* into the decision-making process regarding their lands" (Houde 2014, 23). While, in this case, the stress is more on the politics of difference, Poirier reminds us that this process is not exempt from complex entanglements since "the Nehirowisiw family territories, as post- and neo-colonial spaces, have thus become the grounds of a complex coexistence, negotiations, and entanglement between Indigenous and non-Indigenous regimes of values, land tenure systems, forms of governance, and conceptions of the forestland and its non-human inhabitants" (Poirier 2017, 214).

As demonstrated here, and far from the perception among external observers that the FHT are an obsolete and unnecessary anthropological fad, Algonquin land tenures are at the heart of various contemporary challenges. It is nonetheless true that this series of events calls for new refinements in the anthropological study of the Algonquian FHT, as seen in the recent emergence of the concept of "entangled territorialities," a project defined in a newly published book: "Understanding how entanglements are lived in various parts of the world can illuminate how Indigenous knowledge and practice in land management are reshaped by encounters with modernity, by neoliberalism, by reified oppositions between Indigenous and non-Indigenous, and by the proximity of other practices and engagements with customary lands" (Dussart and Poirier 2017, 4).

Our special issue aligns with this project, as we analyse the FHT as one among various intersecting elements at play on Algonquian lands, including the endurance of hunting practices, the globalised economy of resource extraction, the land claims negotiations and settlements, the difficult coexistence of relational and naturalist ontologies, and the dynamics of cultural and political affirmation. Consequently, this issue takes up the description of the profoundly unsettling dynamics of Canadian neo-colonial practices. As Nadasdy has described it,

> the negotiation and implementation of land claims agreements amount to an attempt to incorporate Aboriginal peoples' unique relationship to the land into the existing legal and political institutions of the Canadian state … In addition, the apparently straightforward act of negotiating these agreements – not to mention implementing them – requires the creation of governmental structures and processes within First Nations communities themselves that are far more compatible with the lifestyles of Euro-Canadian bureaucrats than with those of First Nations hunters and trappers. (Nadasdy 2003, 223–224)

This is true in all the cases described by the authors of this issue. Nonetheless, other dynamics are also at stake, and it is our opinion that a concept like territorial entanglement allows us to embrace not only the ontological obstacles, but the attempts by Indigenous actors to overcome them and find a way for their land ethic, including a sense of responsibility for other beings, to exist in this complex setting.[23] Moreover, it also allows us to understand the multiple life projects of Indigenous peoples as pointed out by Harvey Feit above, including those that seek to integrate strands of global resource exploitation. Accordingly, it is our opinion in this issue that Algonquian FHT can be described as both tools for resistance and spaces of change and adaptation (Papillon 2012; Salée and Lévesque 2010). At stake is the capacity, for individuals and communities alike, to maintain and create the appropriate land tenure institutions to ensure their healthy social, cultural and economic development.

Hence, the contributions in this issue aim to further delineate the complex and dynamic dimensions of the enduring encounter between Algonquian family hunting territories and settler society, a project that eluded the classic debate. In so doing, and in the spirit of the special issue published here over 30 years ago, we seek to create space for dialogue between different generations of scholars working on this topic. We begin with an Introduction by Philip Awashish – a key negotiator of the JBNQA and an expert on his nation's social and cultural structures – and end the collection with Jasmin Habib's frontispiece and curated documents – all of which reminds us of the fundamentals and importance of Cree land tenure and governance. In the Foreword, Morantz presents a retrospective on how the original

debate unfolded among anthropologists and ethnohistorians. Several papers get to the core of the various contemporary stakes and forces in which Algonquian territories are entangled. Ethier and Poirier demonstrate how, in the context of land claims negotiations, the forestland (*notcimik*) is a place of complex entanglement between Indigenous and non-Indigenous hunting practices, regimes of value, land tenure systems, forms of governance, and conceptions of non-human inhabitants. Then, Inksetter explains that archaeological sources can be used to renew discussion about the origins of the FHT. Engaging these data in the contemporary context, she shows how the political stakes raised by land claims negotiations influence the Algonquin perspective on this question of origins. There then follow three papers related to the changing Cree context. Chaplier analyses how, in Nemaska, a notion of "property as sharing" emerged from the changing role of the tallymen and the FHT in the context of the Paix des Braves. Discussing the changes occurring in the context of the Eastmain–Rupert hydroelectric project, she describes the way families and land users have reframed the pressure to privatisation to fit the ethics of sharing so dear to the Cree. Scott examines the dynamic relations between band and family levels of territorial organisation, an aspect that tends to be neglected in the literature. His paper shows how family-level and band-level dimensions of customary tenure have been complementary and integral to one another throughout history. Lessard's contribution opens new theoretical perspectives as he analyses a form of entanglement largely disregarded so far in the region: the entanglement of overlapping land claims. Indeed, following the creation of the Washaw Sibi Eeyou community, he analyses how the mapping of the historical FHT plays into the complex dynamics of community identity politics. He also demonstrates the entanglement of Cree and Algonquin lives and identities in the region. As Sylvie Poirier states in a recent paper (2017), this type of entanglement, while widespread on Algonquian lands, has seldom been analysed and is worthy of our attention. Having curated several letters written by Cree leaders and hunters, Habib closes the issue with indigenous voices of steadfastness and resistance that resonates into the present. Finally, we have the pleasure of reading Feit and Tanner's comments, who offer their reflections on these recent transformations, illuminated by their long familiarity with the FHT debate and, thus, linking the past to the present.

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## Notes

1 The word "Algonquian" refers to a large historic sociolinguistic group extending from the easternmost parts of Canada and New England to the Canadian Rockies and the American Midwest. In its contemporary use, the term usually includes several First Nations in Quebec and Ontario (Atikamekw, Innu, Algonquins, Cree, Micmac, Malecite, Ojibway). In this issue, we have gathered contributions on the groups occupying the northwestern part of Quebec (with a few overlaps in Ontario): the Atikamekw Nehirowisiwok, the Cree of Eeyou Istschee, and the Algonquin/Anicinabe of Abitibi and Ontario). Please mind the difference, at times confusing, between the terms "Algonquian" (larger sociolinguistic group) and "Algonquin" (designating the ten Anicinabe communities).

2 With the exception of Leila Inksetter's paper in which she refers to archaeological data to invalidate the hypothesis of a change in the dietary regime of the Algonquins (from large animals to fur-beaver animals) – an argument often used to bolster the post-contact nature of the FHT.

3 According to Siomonn Pulla (2003, 2006, 2008), as well as Harvey Feit (1991a, 2005) and Alfred I. Hallowell (1951), there has been a misrepresentation regarding Speck's motivation to describe the FHT as Aboriginal in the first place. While the theoretical interest played its part, his true rationale was his advocacy for Indigenous rights. His relationship with Indigenous people was one of friendship and he was convinced that his work could help them. He thought that the settler society would be keener (or just obliged) to recognise Indigenous land claims if he could demonstrate that settlers had indeed developed a form of property relation with these lands. Nonetheless, the theoretical positioning of Speck is what made his work noticeable for the nascent Canadian (and American) anthropology, a reality that informs us about the nature of our discipline in the early twentieth century.

4 In an attempt to better grasp the "otherness" of FHT and Indigenous relationships to land, Tanner, in an early paper (1971, 81–82), formulated an interesting hypothesis. Noting that one of the terms used by the Cree to designate their FHT was *nimeskanu* ("my path") and that their description was more related to the animals themselves than to geographical points, he stated that FHT would be better understood in terms of movements (of the animals and of the hunters on the land). He nonetheless never pursued this novel perspective in his later writings.

5 An exception comes to mind with the work of Alfred I. Hallowell (1949, 1951, 1975), who was ahead of his time with his study of Ojibway ontology (phrased as "world-view"). An early pioneer of what would become decades later the "ontological turn," he pointed out the relational nature of the Ojibway worldview and stressed the existence of social interaction between Ojibway and other-than-human persons (1975).

6 A generalisation that proved particularly problematic in the case of the Innu-Naskapi of Northern Quebec and Labrador. As further confirmed by other authors (Henriksen 1973; Tanner 1983; Mailhot 1986), their extremely mobile caribou-hunting patterns did not fit the FHT theory. To be fair, such an observation had been formulated early in the original debate. According to Davidson (1928, 50), north of the Mistissini band, "as a result of a progressiveness in natural poverty as the barren-ground lands of the Ungava region are approached, it is to be expected that the family ownership of districts will assume less and less importance in the economic system of these people." Similarly, Lips (1947, 398–399) speaks of "the northern tribes who, with lands not divided into family hunting-grounds, jointly hunt the caribou"; and elsewhere (1947, 428) he states that "in the regions of the northern bands south of the Ungava district where caribou herds abound, the institution of separate family hunting grounds would be inappropriate and the entire band, therefore, assembles for a joint hunt of the caribou. But the two practices may exist side by side or even at times alternately." Unfortunately, these nuances were partially outshined by the dichotomist evolution of the debate.

7 Eleanor Leacock's work (1954) and that of authors who followed her perspective (such as Steward and Murphy) offered definitely more nuanced analysis of colonisation and social change. They showed that changes were met with resistance and reluctance to give up the hunting way of life. Nonetheless, the framing of these changes as "acculturation" got the upper hand. The remaining issue, then, if we compare their work to contemporary anthropology or to perspectives that were developing in other contexts at the same time (see, for example, the ethnological work of the Manchester School in Africa), is their unilineal reading of social change. As Feit has stressed, "neither Steward nor Leacock considered the possibility of the continuation of distinct moral, productive, and social economies in contemporary indigenous or hunting societies" (2005b, 62).

8 He directed the project from 1964 to 1971. Then, from 1971 to 1976, the project became, under the leadership of Richard F. Salisbury, a laboratory for applied anthropology in the context of the James Bay hydroelectric development. See, for details about the project, Adrian Tanner's interview for the series "Les possédés et leurs modes": https://www.anthropologie-societes.ant.ulaval.ca/adrian-tanner-film-2-life-trapline-yukon-and-mcgill-cree-project.

9 Ignatius La Rusic, Adrian Tanner and Harvey Feit, but also Bernard Bernier, Roger Pothier and Marcel Samson.

10 Coincidentally, the McGill-Cree Project started a few years before one of the biggest resource development projects in Canadian history, the James Bay hydroelectric project, intruded on Cree territory. At the time, the choice to focus on the Cree was based on various developments ongoing in the region (new mines and a forestry boom). With the new rail line and roads built in the 1960s, Southern James Bay was seen as a good area to study the impacts of new developments on Indigenous peoples (Harvey Feit, personal communication).

11 This "project of the century," at the time of its announcement, included three regional hydroelectric complexes, while its road infrastructure would stimulate the expansion of the mining and forestry industry throughout Cree lands.

12 See the special issue edited in the then newly created *Recherches Amérindiennes au Québec* journal (1971), in which the editorial board acknowledges that "facing the potential consequences of this project, we had to 'say something' … or, at least, allow those working with the Cree to express themselves" (1971, 1).

13 This makes the Cree FHT relatively unique among the Algonquian world, in which there are important disparities regarding the integration (or lack thereof) of FHT in conservation policies.

14 Their interests in hunting practices and land tenure varied. As he mostly worked on spiritual and religious manifestations (2002 [1975]), Preston's interest in hunting activities was less direct (most of his work on the topic was actually done with the Cree living on the western side of James Bay; see George, Berkes, and Preston, 1995). As for Tanner, he is the only one who published a complete monograph on Cree hunting practices (1979), while Feit and Scott have been the most prolific on the recent evolutions of Cree society, maintaining their interest and publication effort to the present day (Feit 1971, 1989, 1991a, 1991b, 2000, 2004a, 2004b, 2005, 2009, 2017; Scott 1982, 1984, 1997, 2001, 2004, 2013, 2017).

15 They were obviously not the only ones to do so, but they are definitely the most prolific and recognised scholars. Alongside them, either developing a temporary interest or working on different topics, we can mention Berkes (1986, 1988), Brelsford (1983), Salisbury (1986), La Rusic (1968), Désy (1968), Craik and Casgrain (1986), Knight (1968), and more recently, Carlson (2004, 2008), Niezen (1993, 1998), Mulrennan (2015), Atkinson and Mulrennan (2009), Desbiens (2004, 2008, 2013a, 2013b), Adelson (2000), Gagné (1994), Craik (2004), Whiteman (1998, 2004) and Susan Preston (2011).

16 If we define property in a strict sense. For a more detailed perspective on the property debate, see Chaplier (2014 and this issue).

17 Starting from a Marxist perspective, Tanner wanted "to show that the fundamental complex of social relations, which I have called the mode of production, is not simply a direct function of material conditions, but is a construct

through which ideas and symbols about the material environment are put into action" (1979, 43).

18 For various reasons, we have unfortunately been unable to include the case of Innu (Montagnais) in this issue. Nonetheless, for those interested in their contemporary relation to their lands, see (for example) Armitage (1990), Charest (1995, 1996), Lacasse (1996, 2004), Mailhot (1993), Mailhot and Vincent (1980), Tanner (1983) and Samson (2003).

19 A policy that has not been very successful for the Algonquian groups in Quebec. Indeed, with the exception of the JBNQA, no agreement has been reached. After decades of studies, reports and negotiations, the Algonquins, the Innu, and the Atikamekw are still waiting for their rights to be recognised.

20 At times not accessible to the public, a complete description of this literature is difficult. Some of the more comprehensive reports include Conseil Atikamekw-Montagnais (1982), Conseil de la Nation Attikamekw Nehirowisiw (1997, 1998), Association Mamo Atoskewin Atikamekw (1994), Dandenault (1983), Poirier and Niquay (1999), Frénette (1988, 1993), Henriksen (1977), Roark-Calnek (1995, 1996) (non-exhaustive list).

21 For the Atikamekw, see Poirier (2000, 2001, 2004, 2008, 2010, 2013), Wyatt (2004), Wyatt and Chilton (2014), Morissette (2007), Houde (2011, 2014), Ethier (2014) and Laurent and Veilleux (2014). For the Algonquins, see Bousquet (2002, 2005), Leroux (2004, 2009) and Pasternak (2013).

22 This negotiation process started a little later for the Algonquins, whose situation is rendered more complex by their overlapping with previous agreements (Treaty 9 in Ontario, JBNQA in Quebec; Bousquet 2005).

23 A complex process that the idea of entanglements describes well. Another fitting anthropological concept, not so far from the idea of entanglements, is that of "friction," described by Anna Tsing: "Roads are a good image for conceptualizing how friction works: Roads create pathways that make motion easier and more efficient, but in doing so they limit where we go. The ease of travel they facilitate is also a structure of confinement. Friction inflects historical trajectories, enabling, excluding, and particularizing. The effects of encounters across difference can be compromising or empowering. Friction is not a synonym for resistance. Hegemony is made as well as unmade with friction. It is these vicissitudes that I am calling friction. Friction makes global connection powerful and effective. Meanwhile, without even trying, friction gets in the way of the smooth operation of global power" (Tsing 2005, 6). It is also a powerful metaphor to describe Algonquian contemporaneity.

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