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Symbolism and Inter-Ethnic Relations Among Hunter-Gatherers: Chipewyan Conflict Lore

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RÉSUMÉ

La façon dont la rivalité et la compétition inter-ethniques sont codées symboliquement dans le folklore oral implique l'utilisation de relations complexes entre le comportement social contemporain et les processus historiques; ceci est manifesté par les contes de conflits des indiens Tchitpewayan, chasseurs du subarctique canadien.

The Island

Once a Cree man and a Chipewyan man were travelling by canoe on a very large lake. They came to an island where they stopped and walked around, but when the Chipewyan was not looking the Cree returned to the canoe and paddled away leaving the other man alone on the island. The Chipewyan

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man found that many geese were landing there as that was the fall of the year. He made snares from the fibers of plants and was able to catch a large number of the geese. Then he dug a large hole in the ground and lined it with goose feathers. He also cached a great quantity of dried goose meat in that hole. He crawled into the hole and in that manner was able to pass the entire winter in warmth and with food.

In the spring the Cree man once again paddled to the island, but the Chipewyan man saw him approaching and hid from sight. As the Cree walked along the shore he said aloud: "I wonder where his bones are?" The Chipewyan man knew that the Cree was expecting to find him dead. So when the Cree had walked some distance from his canoe the Chipewyan quickly ran from his hiding place. The Cree man heard the sound of paddling. He ran to the beach and saw the Chipewyan man travelling away in the canoe leaving him stranded on the island now.

Chipewyan trapper
Northern Saskatchewan, Canada 1971

INTRODUCTION

The above narrative, "The Island," is one example of a genre of contemporary oral literature among the Chipewyan Indians of central subarctic Canada. Fundamental to the structure of these tales is the presence of an adverse social environment, represented by traditional Cree enemies, and a way of surmounting the adversity. As such, the narratives serve as symbolic lessons in problem-solving. The appropriateness of these symbolic messages, given the nature of Chipewyan historical and cultural experience, will be explored in this paper and used as a basis for addressing broader issues regarding inter-societal conflict.

The social anthropological literature on marriage, trade and political alliance contains ample documentation of the varied manner in which cooperative interactions between societies or ethnic groups reinforce cultural differences. Barth's (1969: 15-16) notion of the *complementarity* of cultural differences among interacting groups is an attempt to model such systems of interdependence. Of course, there is a reverse side to this processual coin. Economic competition, warfare and other hostile relations can also reinforce, if not magnify, social and cultural differences between societies in conflict (Le Vine and Campbell 1972: 29-42). It is the relationship of such *negative* forms of interaction to out-group imagery and social distance that forms the general concern of this paper. More

specifically, it seeks to specify the manner in which rivalry and competition are symbolically coded in oral folklore. Are tales of inter-group hostility reflective commentaries upon historical events? Are they subtle indicators of ongoing attitudes and behavior? Do they function to justify and perpetuate cultural differences? Such questions form an analytical framework for assessing Chipewyan folklore. The preliminary answer at this stage of investigation will be affirmative. The oral literature does appear to function in all of the contexts suggested above but in a complex manner which can only be clarified by further research of a multi-disciplinary nature.

As Berndt (1966: 252) has noted, many North American ethnologists have approached myth analysis from the perspective of how accurately and in what dimensions oral literature reflects other aspects of a people's life, a scholarly tradition that extends back to Boas' (1914) pioneering work. The structural approach to myth, as exemplified by the writings of Lévi-Strauss (1963) and Leach (1969), seeks explanations of the basic paradoxes of social existence in symbolic codes. Despite the extensive debate raging over it's logical and methodological merits and weaknesses, the structuralist paradigm has generated stimulating analyses of North American folklore materials. For example, Carroll's (1981: 310) recent re-evaluation of Trickster characters rejects Lévi-Strauss' *specific* interpretation of the empirical-symbolic associations involved in Trickster mythology but upholds the *general* structural hypothesis that "the function of myth is to provide a conceptual model that openly expresses some dilemma, while at the same time provides a basis for evading that dilemma." It will be argued that the problem-solving qualities of Chipewyan lore are compatible with this general hypothesis, although it should be noted that structural analysts have tended to emphasize inter-personal or intra-societal relationships as sources of tension and opposition. The structure of Chipewyan conflict lore is explicitly inter-societal.

Jacobs' (1959) classic stylistic study of Clackamas Chinook oral literature does examine anxieties concerning financial connections, in-law relationships and alien shamans in an inter-village context, but the folktales are interpreted largely as commentaries upon troublesome inter-personal relations and aspects of personality. Again, the frame of reference is not pointedly inter-societal or inter-ethnic.

As a final comment upon precedent, it is worth noting that Firth's (1961: 5) functionalist analysis of Tikopian oral tradition emphasizes its role as a mirror of existing sociopolitical arrangements but minimizes its potential as a document of past behavior:

> No one will deny that traditional tales may embody a reflection of some incidents that occurred in the past, or that they may show elements of curiosity and explanation, dramatic interest and imaginative impulse. But for the social anthropologist the primary standpoint of evaluation must be that of concentration upon empirical data – the tales as communicated and the local explanation of them and their observed context in the social life of the people.

The functional-contextual perspective as summarized above is a valuable one, and the recitation of Chipewyan conflict tales may hold significance for the manner in which Chipewyan and Cree interact in ongoing situations. Whether or not oral literature provides meaningful insights upon historical events is a complex issue. Where independent sources of information exist, as in the case of ethnohistorical documentation and archaeological evidence, it behooves the anthropologist to connect these frameworks with possible references to past behavior in oral lore. Where such connections can be established, of course, it may be possible to assess the "accuracy" of lore from the standpoint of Western history. However, accuracy in this sense is a less intriguing issue than the extent to which oral lore provides a key to understanding historical processes that generated ongoing social conditions. This is an empirical matter which must be evaluated for each social system, and some preliminary findings in the Chipewyan material will be discussed. Clearly, there is little reason for assuming that oral literature, by its very nature, is ahistorical or "quasi-history."

CHIPEWYAN CONFLICT LORE: THE CASE MATERIAL

The oral literature to be considered here was collected as a by-product of ethnographic research on contemporary economic behavior in the Chipewyan Indian community of Patuanak, Saskatchewan in the years between 1971 and 1977 (Jarvenpa 1976, 1977, 1979, 1980). These Athapaskan-speaking people occupy the Upper Churchill River drainage, an important historical contact zone emerging with the growth of the European and EuroCanadian market economy in the late eighteenth century. Early fur company posts were situated near the divide separating the Mackenzie

watershed from those waters draining east into Hudson Bay, and thus began a process of accelerating contacts and competition between Chipewyan and Algonkian-speaking Cree populations gravitating toward the same resources. An extended discussion of the historical situation will be presented later. The essential point here is that loosely articulated bands of subarctic hunter-gatherers from two different cultural-linguistic traditions (Chipewyan and Cree) became involved with each other in new ways as their involvement with Europeans and the fur trade economy intensified. As depicted in Figure I, Patuanak is located in the very southern range of what has been "Chipewyan territory" for approximately the past two centuries. Immediately to the south are communities with predominantly Cree or Metis Cree composition, such as Ile a la Crosse, Pinehouse Lake and Canoe Lake.

The Patuanak folktales were unsolicited. That is, they were given as spontaneous narrations, most often by middle-aged and elderly males in the context of evening entertainment in trapping, hunting and fishing camps. Audiences were generally small, consisting of the two or three men composing the work partnership in addition to myself. The middle-aged narrators typically spoke in the local form of English. In those cases where tales were recited in Chipewyan by elderly men, English translations were provided by younger companions.

Thus far, the oral literature inventory from Patuanak includes 21 separate tales or story-plots, and nine of these (over 40 percent) offer as their central themes serious conflicts and hostility between Chipewyan and Cree. It is this body of lore that will be the subject of analysis in ensuing discussion, and the complete texts for these nine conflict tales are contained in the Appendix. Negative interactions between Chipewyan and Cree appear in virtually all of the earlier published sources on Chipewyan folklore as well.[1]

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[1] Although ethnographic research in northern Athapaskan Indian communities was rather limited until recent years, a substantial collection of oral literature from Chipewyan sources has been compiled. In readily accessible published work there is Emile Petitot's (1886) material, largely gathered in the Great Slave Lake and Lake Athabasca vicinities in the 1860s and 1870s. From the early twentieth century there are collections by Goddard (1912) and Curtis (1928) at Cold Lake, Alberta; Lowie (1912) at Fort Chipewyan, Alberta; Lofthouse (1913), location unspecified;

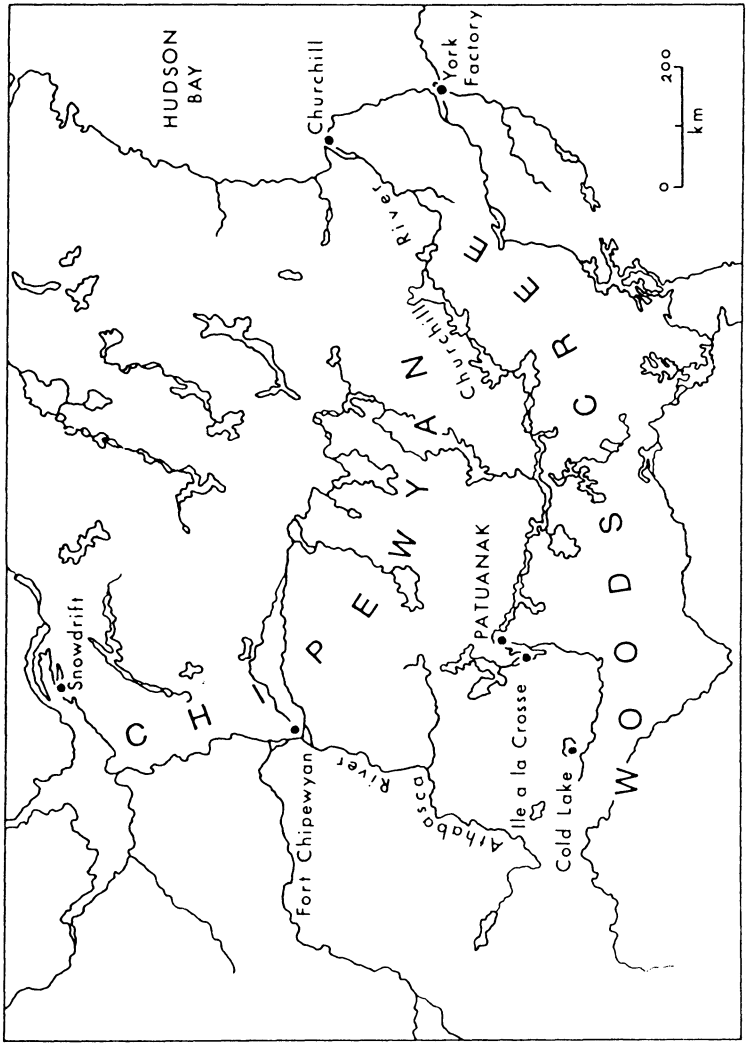

FIGURE 1 - *Recent territorial distribution of Chipewyan and Cree groups in north-central Canada.*

Such themes appear in collections obtained in the Great Slave Lake and Lake Athabasca vicinities (Petitot 1886), at Cold Lake, Alberta (Goddard 1912, Curtis 1928), at Fort Chipewyan, Alberta (Lowie 1912), and at Churchill, Manitoba (Birket-Smith 1930).

However, the prevalence of this kind of folktale is most pronounced among the Patuanak Chipewyan. Considered either in terms of absolute numbers of "conflict tales," or in terms of the proportion of such tales with respect to the entire known folktale inventory of a locality, this is the case. It is tempting to posit some sort of relationship between spatial proximity of groups (Chipewyan and Cree), levels of inter-group hostility and, in turn, the symbolic expression of hostility in folklore. Even though Chipewyan communities in close association with Cree communities appear to have more conflict lore than those that have had less direct or prolonged contact with Cree, an hypothesis of this kind is simplistic and unsatisfactory. Such an explanation, for example, would not account for the relatively low incidence of conflict lore at places like Fort Churchill (Birket-Smith 1930) where Chipewyan and Cree were engaged in competitive struggles for trading privileges in the early eighteenth century. Of course, there is an obvious methodological problem in that the motives for and means of collecting folktale materials were not uniform in the different settings and time periods, and, therefore, none of the inventories can be considered a "complete" record or a randomly sampled record, if the latter is even possible. Table 1 is not an attempt to reify conflict lore frequencies but rather a way of indicating the relative abundance and distribution of this form of oral literature.

ADVERSITY AND ADVERSITY ESCAPED

To facilitate the analysis of thematic structures in the Patuanak conflict lore, I have adapted the framework developed by Dundes

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and Birket-Smith (1930) at Churchill, Manitoba. More recently Cohen and VanStone (1964) produced an innovative analysis of dependency and self-sufficiency themes in Chipewyan folktales using some of the early twentieth century material noted above but also employing Chipewyan children's lore gathered by VanStone at Snowdrift on Great Slave Lake. Also of relevance is a recent Indian education publication by Reynolds (1979) which features folktales primarily from Chipewyan in northern Saskatchewan.

(1964, 1965) for examining the morphology of North American Indian folktales in general. Dundes identifies widely occurring functions or *motifemes* which are occupied by the specific content of *motifs* or alternative *allomotifs*.[2] Motifemes typically are strung together in sequences, as in the case of the common structural sequence: Lack (L) and Lack Liquidated (LL). The goal in this study is not to employ motifeme sequences for pure morphological or syntagmatic analysis since this would be removed from problems of symbolism and social-historical meaning. The emphasis on Dundes' framework will be its usefulness as a tool in distilling the organization of important themes and messages. For example, one of the most salient features of much of North American Indian folktales, including the Chipewyan lore, is a movement from disequilibrium to equilibrium. Dundes' (1965: 208) L-LL sequence represents "how abundance was lost or how lack was liquidated." By the same token, much of the Chipewyan conflict lore is a movement from instability to stability in social relations. It is possible to view warfare and hostility as a "lack" of social harmony, although this is a modification of Dundes' original conception of disequilibrium as an absence of tangible materials (eg. food) or an excess of tangible substances (eg. flood water). For this reason the motifeme *Adversity* (Adv) will be introduced to signify instability in the context of an ever-present hostile social environment, the environment of threatening Cree neighbors.

As will be illustrated below, a common and logical sequence is Adv-AE. That is, harmony is restored by escaping from adversity. In this sense, AE signifies Attempted Escape in the manner specified by Dundes, but in the Chipewyan conflict lore it has the closely allied meaning of *Adversity Escaped* or *Adversity Eliminated.* One other modification is in order. Some of the Chipewyan narrators include substantial prologues in their tales. These are informational backdrops, assertions or statements that provide a reference point for the rest of the tale. While these are not part of the drama or "action" sequence of the narrative, they will be identified simply as *Postulates* (Post), and corollaries or modifications of such

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[2] Dundes gained inspiration for his framework from Propp's (1928) structural study of Russian folktales and from Pike's (1954-1960) theoretical contributions in structural linguistics.

basic statements will be *Qualifications* (Qual). Several other common motifeme sequences recognized by Dundes are the following:

Task (T)
Task Accomplished (TA)

Interdiction (Int)
Violation (Viol)
Consequence (Conseq)
Attempted Escape (AE)

Lack (L)
Deceit (Dct)
Deception (Dcpn)
Lack Liquidated (LL)

TABLE 1

Absolute and relative frequency of Chipewyan Cree conflict lore in Chipewyan communities

Community or Vicinity	Number of Conflict Tales	Total Folktale Inventory	Percentage of Conflict Lore in the Inventory
Patuanak (Jarvenpa 1970s)	9	21	42.8%
Cold Lake (Curtis 1928)	2	6	33.3
Fort Chipewyan (Lowie 1912)	6	18	33.3
Cold Lake (Goddard 1912)	3	13	23.1
Churchill (Birket-Smith 1930)	4	19	21.1
Great Slave Lake[a] (Petitot 1886)	2	12	16.6
Combined Localities	26	89	29.2%

[a] Although Petitot provides 21 folktales from five different localities, only those from Great Slave Lake (the largest collection: 12 tales) are used for comparative purposes here.

The above do not exhaust the range of existing or possible motifemes and sequences, and shorter sequences frequently are combined to form more complex structures. The following list contains the nine tales of Chipewyan / Cree confrontation arranged in structural sequences, and the reader can compare these with the content of the original texts in the Appendix:

1. *Labidsas Under Water*

   Adv Cree medicine woman turns Labidsas' food to sand, making him ill.

   AE Labidsas overcomes the Cree woman's magic by immersing himself in a lake.

2. *Eredk'ali and the Cree*

   Post Eredk'ali is a Chipewyan culture hero, a relative of local people, and a warrior against the Cree.

   Adv Cree enemies pursue Eredk'ali.

   AE Eredk'ali escapes the Cree by running rapidly between two hills without touching the ground.

3. *Segalaze and the Cree*

   Post Segalaze is a Chipewyan culture hero with quick legs and strength who subdues Cree enemies.

   Adv The Chipewyan encounter a group of threatening Cree.

   AE With his spear and his quickness Segalaze kills all the Cree and saves his people.

   Adv The Chipewyan encounter dangerous grizzly bears.

   AE Segalaze again saves his people by confusing the bears with his speed and then killing them.

4. *The Island*

   Dct A Cree man lures a Chipewyan man to an island on a friendly pretext.

   Dcpn Chipewyan man follows and is abandoned.

T Chipewyan man makes preparations to live on the island.

TA Chipewyan man survives the winter alone.

AE Chipewyan man escapes the island by placing the Cree man in the same predicament.

5. *Labidsas and the Old Cree Woman*

Adv Cree medicine woman harrasses Chipewyan men for gifts of food by threatening sorcery.

T Labidsas sets out to conquer the Cree magician.

Int Cree woman threatens Labidsas with harm if her requests are denied.

Viol Labidsas deliberately rejects the woman's demands.

Conseq Labidsas is besieged by magically produced storms, wolves and a fish hook imbedded in his body.

AE Labidsas uses his power and his animal helper to escape the calamities.

TA Labidsas kills the Cree woman with the magic fish hook.

6. *Dog's Hind Leg*

Post The Cree have an advantage over the Chipewyan in access to European goods and guns in the early fur trade.

T Chipewyan attempt to contact first white fur traders.

Adv Southward-moving Chipewyan are thwarted by gun-wielding Cree who capture Chipewyan woman Dineldare, "slave woman".

Dct Cree try to convince white trader that Chipewyan are savage beasts who should be killed off.

AE Dineldare's beauty impresses trader who gives her freedom.

TA Dineldare returns to her people and brings the fur trade to the Chipewyan.

7. *The Magic Glass*

T Chipewyan trapper travels to large fur post to trade his furs.

TA The trapper sells his furs and receives a gift from the post manager, a magnifying glass.

T Two Chipewyan magicians and the trapper join forces in a raid against the Cree for horses.

Adv Chipewyan men are detected by Cree magicians and captured.

Int Cree chief threatens to kill Chipewyan men unless they surpass him in magic.

Viol Chipewyan men fail in performing magic.

Conseq Cree prepare the Chipewyan men for death.

AE Chipewyan trapper scares the Cree into submission with his magnifying glass.

TA Chipewyan men return safely to their home territory with booty of Cree horses.

8. *Raven-Head (DatsaΘi)*

Post DatsaΘi is helpful in Chipewyan battles against the Cree.

Qual DatsaΘi can also assist the Cree against the Chipewyan and is, therefore, unpredictable.

9. *Chipewyan/Cree Peace Pact*

Adv Chipewyan and Cree people are continually fighting each other.

T Chipewyan man and Cree man simultaneously search for eagle feathers.

TA The two men encounter eagles and each other at the same location.

AE The two men make a peace agreement, and the Chipewyan and Cree people become friends.

PROBLEM-SOLVING THEMES

Considering the conflict lore as a whole, there are very few situations in these tales where the Cree are not portrayed in derogatory terms. Frequently they are presented as openly hostile aggressors in warfare (tales 2, 3, 6) or as perpetrators of supernatural attacks through the agency of sorcery (tales 1, 5). In more subtle confrontations, as illustrated by the canoe travelers in *The Island* (tale 4), the Chipewyan are imperiled by Cree ploy and deception. A normative statement emerges from these narratives which emphasizes overt antagonism, deceit and untrustworthiness as primary qualities of Cree character. It is also apparent that most of the adverse situations affecting the Chipewyan are initiated by Cree action upon them. In many instances (tales 1, 2, 3, 5) *Adversity* is the initial condition. The Cree are plotting or aggressing against the Chipewyan who must overcome the adversity. Only in a few situations is this aggressor/victim relationship reversed. In *Dog's Hind Leg* and *The Magic Glass*, for example, the Chipewyan are endangered as a result of their inroads and activity against the Cree.

The fact that the Chipewyan present themselves as the victims of Cree aggression is interesting in itself, and if one is inclined to follow the psychological interpretations of Cohen and VanStone (1964) such patterns may reflect deeply-rooted strivings of dependency and passivity. At the same time, however, the Chipewyan portray themselves as ultimate victors. In every case where the Cree become a threat or an obstacle to some goal, invariably the Chipewyan overcome the impediment. The paths to overcoming adversity are numerous and varied. Physical strength and speed of super-human proportions are employed by the great Chipewyan culture heroes *Segalaze* and *Eredk'ali* (tales 2, 3). Supernatural power is the salvation of the *inkonzedene* or shaman, *Labidsas* (tales 1, 5). *Dineldare*, the slave woman, triumphs through endurance and physical beauty (tale 6). In yet other cases, a combination of endurance, cunning and deceit succeeds (tales 4, 7). In essence, the conflict tales are simple proverbs or lessons in problem-solving. The predominant message is:

> The social environment of Cree neighbors is hostile and dangerous; But we can adapt to these circumstances with strength, intelligence and supernatural power.

To the extent that lore can be viewed as coded recipes for coping with difficulty, it is apparent that the Chipewyan material also reflects a strong value of self-sufficiency.

Two of the tales stand apart from the pattern described above. *Raven-head (DatsaΘi)* is anomalous in two ways. First, it provides no resolution or solution to conflict. Secondly, it proceeds no farther than a simple statement of conditions, that *Raven-Head* helps both Chipewyan and Cree against each other. Despite the fact that an action motifeme sequence is not developed, an ambivalent attitude toward the culture hero-trickster character is displayed. The basis for the ambivalence is seen more readily in the longer tales collected by Goddard (1912: 54-55), Lowie (1912: 175-178) and Reynolds (1979: 60-66) in which *Raven-Head* magically calls forth Cree to kill the Chipewyan with whom he lives. Perhaps the fundamental significance of all the *Raven-Head* tales is that they represent an area of social relations that cannot be controlled or predicted. Shifting loyalties are painful, and they are often unpredictable. *Raven-Head* personifies such uncertainty.

The final tale, *Chipewyan / Cree Peace Pact*, is also an anomaly. It is conspicuous in this collection as the only tale where a cooperative theme prevails. In an accidental encounter the Chipewyan and Cree agree to end their traditional enmity and build a friendship. This form of problem-solving appears in none of the other Chipewyan folktale collections. In tales where some cooperative behaviour occurs, such as the Chipewyan / Cree intermarriage in *Ebedaholtihe* (Goddard 1912: 55-56), it is overshadowed by antagonistic interactions. *Chipewyan / Cree Peace Pact*, then, offers another avenue toward coping with other societies. The question of why this theme is so poorly developed will be returned to later.

REFERENCES TO EUROCANADIAN OBJECTS, EVENTS AND PROCESSES

It is interesting that as the Chipewyan conflict narratives increase in length and in "motifemic depth" there is a tendency to incorporate references to EuroCanadian objects, events and behavior. Table 2 illustrates this relationship. For example, the shorter narratives (tales 1, 2) are structured in terms of a simple Adv-AE sequence and include no mention of the European world.

Tales of moderate length (tales 3, 4) repeat cycles of Adv-AE, or add Dct-Dcpn and T-TA sequences, and do not refer to European behavior except for incidental analogies to native culture heroes.

TABLE 2

Narrative Length, Motifeme Structure and European References in Chipewyan Conflict Lore

Folktale (listed in Appendix)	Number of Words in Narrative	Number of Motifemes in Narrative	Number of European Events, Objects or Processes[a]
1.	107	2	0
2.	193	3	0
3.	304	5	0[b]
4.	243	5	0
5.	593	7	5[c]
6.	518	6	4[d]
7.	772	9	8[e]
8.	59	2	0
9.	261	4	0

[a] This refers to the number of kinds or classes of European or EuroCanadian items and behavior.

[b] The references to Superman, Flash and Cassius Clay are almost afterthoughts, and it becomes an arbitrary matter whether they should be counted here. Clearly, they are not intrinsic to the story-plot. It should be noted that younger literate Chipewyan often preface folktales concerning the renowned culture heroes by drawing analogies with comic book culture heroes. This is an interesting phenomenon in itself.

[c] References include the barge, inter-village supply freighting, flour, lard, and a pan. A variant of this tale gives the Cree woman's residence as Stanley Mission, a settlement organized as a result of the late eighteenth century fur trade.

[d] References include fur trading, white fur traders, the Fort Churchill post on Hudson Bay, and guns.

[e] References include fur trading, the Hudson Bay post (presumably Fort Churchill), a local trading outpost, a fur post manager, a magnifying glass, England, cloth and horses.

The longest tales (tales 5, 6, 7), such as *The Magic Glass*, have the most complex motifeme sequences and contain many references to EuroCanadian technology and economic life that are intrinsic to the drama of the narratives.

In *Labidsas and the Old Cree Woman* the context of Chipewyan/Cree conflict is that of inter-community freighting of goods by barge.[3] This form of economic activity, and food products such as flour and lard, are a result of the Indians' historical involvement in the fur trade. In *Dog's Hind Leg* and *The Magic Glass*, references to Europeans and the fur trade economy increase and become more integral to the stories' structure. The motivation of the Chipewyan to become involved in the embryonic fur trade is the basis for the former tale, and the "slave woman" *Dineldare's* difficulties refer to an early eighteenth century context when Cree maintained exclusive access to York Factory, a post contested by English and French traders.[4] In The Magic Glass a specific historical context is not indicated, but the reference to a parent Hudson's Bay Company post (perhaps Fort Churchill) is clear. The additional reference in this tale to "local post" indicates a later stage in history, generally post-1800, when a system of interior central posts and daughter outposts emerged. However, involvement in fur trading becomes secondary to a Chipewyan

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[3] The use of the expression "barge", rather than "York boat" or "scow", is noteworthy because the barge is essentially a twentieth century conveyance in the Upper Churchill drainage.

[4] As noted by Gillespie (1975: 357), there were a number of Chipewyan "slave women" held captive by the Cree both during the period of French control of York Factory, between 1694 and 1714, and after the Hudson's Bay Company's recapture of the fort in 1714. No doubt, it was one of these Chipewyan women who became the celebrated "slave woman" in 1715 by contacting over 400 of her people and bringing "160 Men the Cleverest" to a peace conference with the Cree and the English traders. Curtis (1928: 8-9) collected a narrative about the Chipewyan captive woman *Thanadelthur* ("marten shake") which closely resembles the tale *Dog's Hind Leg*. Inexplicably, he treats this story as a "native account" of history and does not include it as part of a body of "mythology," even though many of the tales lumped in the latter category also emphasize Chipewyan/Cree conflict. It seems likely that Curtis implicitly follows Boas' (1914: 454-57) distinction between "mythical" and "historical" forms of lore. Because *Thanadelthur* has a highly specific historical context he, therefore, segregates it from the rest of the oral literature. On the other hand, Birket-Smith (1930: 99-100) collected a variant of this tale, but he treats it as part of a broad spectrum of oral tradition or "legends."

plot against Cree for horses. Northern Plains Indian groups in the Saskatchewan area, including the Plains Cree, received horses relatively late, in the period dating approximately 1740 to 1790 (Mandelbaum 1940: 195, Ray 1974: 156-162). As will be discussed later, the proximity of Chipewyan to horse-bearing Cree populations on the southern fringe of the boreal forest was itself a product of growing involvement with Europeans.

Thus, while all of the conflict tales involve problems in coping with hostile Cree neighbors, those with identifiable EuroCanadian elements or settings exhibit prolonged and complex structuring before achieving resolution or equilibrium. If there is any merit in arguing that conflict resolution and decision-making became more complicated in the new economic and political environment created by Europeans, it is plausible that such intricacies would be registered symbolically in oral folklore. However, without a larger collection of lore than is presently available this assumption remains speculative.

THE BEHAVIORAL BASIS OF CONFLICT LORE

The major assertion of this study is that Chipewyan conflict lore symbolically codifies actual inter-group competition that has been prevalent historically, but that it also codifies other kinds of inter-ethnic relations which have not been overtly competitive. To appreciate this behavioral basis, it is necessary to briefly examine what is known about Chipewyan / Cree relations in general and in the Upper Churchill drainage specifically.

The ethnohistorical research of Gillespie (1975) and Smith (1975) identifies the late eighteenth century rivalry between Montreal-based trading companies and the English Hudson's Bay Company as responsible for drawing some Chipewyan groups southward into the full boreal forest. It was here, particularly along the Athabasca and Churchill River systems, that the Chipewyan came into contact with Cree populations at least some of whom had been moving westward with the expanding fur trade. However, nearly a century before this, and hundreds of miles to the east, intense trade rivalries between Chipewyan and Cree had been developing as English and French traders competed for the embryonic fur industry along the west shore of Hudson Bay. By 1720 the Cree and the Assiniboine were

already entrenched as the major Indian middlemen, controlling the fur trade out of York Factory "through the use of force (Ray 1974: 59)." During that early period, it is likely that the traditional adaptation of Chipewyan to the hunting of migratory barren-ground caribou along the forest-tundra transition prevented their enthusiastic conversion to fur trapping (Gillespie 1975: 364-368, Smith 1975: 412). On the other hand, attempts by some Chipewyan to establish trading contacts and trapping grounds southeastward toward Hudson Bay in the early 1700s were accompanied by intensive warfare with Cree who had a military advantage in firearms. Apparently, the Chipewyan suffered extensive population losses.[5] This disruptive conflict set the context for the Hudson's Bay Company's peace-making mission of 1715. Captain James Knight of York Factory sent out William Stewart in the company of a Chipewyan "slave woman" to negotiate a peace between local bands of Chipewyan and Cree (Kenny 1932: 53-56). As noted previously (see note 4), the account of the "slave woman" *Dineldare* in the tale *Dog's Hind Leg* almost becomes a literal chronicle of this early period of abrasive competition. It seems fitting that the Chipewyan expression "dog's hind leg" is a euphemism for the gun.

In the late 1700s the Chipewyan began expanding their range south and southwestward into the Upper Churchill drainage. By the 1790s Ile a la Crosse had become the major point of trade in this area, eliminating the need for local Indian groups to make the long trading journey eastward to Fort Churchill. It is generally accepted that this later period of Chipewyan territorial expansion involved less overt hostility between Chipewyan and Cree (Gillespie 1975: 368-374). Cree losses to the smallpox epidemic of 1780-81 may have facilitated a Chipewyan southward movement, but the disease presumably debilitated both populations.[6] At some point in the early

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[5] James Knight at York Factory reported that as many as 6 000 Indian men had been killed in fighting along the Cree-Chipewyan border during that period. He also noted that most of the casualties were suffered by the Chipewyan and speculated that their losses would have been reduced had the Chipewyan received firearms earlier (Ray 1974: 19).

[6] In 1822-23, officials of the Hudson's Bay Company for the Ile a la Crosse District observed that 476 "Northern Indians" (Chipewyan) reported regularly to the main post at Ile a la Crosse while 231 Cree Indians normally traded at the other district posts at Cold Lake and Lac La Ronge (PAC HBC B.89/e/1, fo. 1-6). In an 1838 census the HBC reported that the English River District had 489 Chipewyan associated with the Ile a la Crosse post, 289 Cree at the Green

nineteenth century the upper reaches of the Churchill River itself began crystallizing as an approximate boundary or contact zone between the two indigenous cultures, with the southernmost bands of Chipewyan to the north and groups of Western Woods Cree immediately to the south. *Thilanottine* ("men of the end of the head," or "those who dwell at the head of the lakes") (Petitot 1883: 651, Smith 1975: 413) became a general regional badge of identification for the southern Chipewyan. Those Chipewyan who specifically became associated with the Ile a la Crosse trading sphere, including the immediate ancestors of the Patuanak Chipewyan, became known as *kesyehot'ine* or "poplar house people".

It is clear that the expansion of the fur trade was rapidly re-arranging Indian societies spatially and economically. An important key to interpreting the conflict lore is the fact that the Chipewyan movement into the Upper Churchill drainage was *not* an easy transition economically or socially. From the earliest years of the nineteenth century the Cree in this area were able to assume a position of socio-economic dominance over the Chipewyan, and this system of stratification expressed itself primarily in the manner in which the two groups articulated with the mercantile economy.

Initial competition for fur resources actually saw Chipewyan encroachment upon beaver hunting locales habitually used by Cree, often at the behest of the fur traders (Gillespie 1975: 383). However, the Cree were able to force reparations of rum and other items from encroaching Chipewyan trappers (Mackenzie 1802: lxxviii) when hostilities could be avoided. There is no evidence of reciprocal payments when Cree made forays north of the Churchill River. Rather, the Chipewyan made every effort to avoid bush contacts with northward-traveling Cree, and they were practicing elaborate

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Lake post and 365 Indians (presumably these were mostly Cree) trading at Lac La Ronge (HBC PAM B.239/z/10, fo. 60). Of course, early population figures for any locality must be interpreted in the light of regional population movements and historical trends. Through the nineteenth century the mixed-blood or Metis population grew rapidly, contributing to an increasingly visible rudimentary working class at the major fur posts (Brown 1976). The Metis Cree at Ile a la Crosse and its outposts increased considerably in numbers during this period. However, the Chipewyan in the nineteenth century were basically summer residents in the Upper Churchill drainage. After trading, they dispersed far north and northeastward for winter trapping and hunting, and this was the case for many families as late as the 1940s (Jarvenpa 1978; Jarvenpa, Brumbach and Buell 1980).

forms of surveillance into the early years of this century. Elderly Patuanak residents, who refer to the experiences of their parents and grandparents, comment on the necessity for quick camp relocations:

> The Chipewyan people would just go to the backside of an island, and the Cree wouldn't even see them. Just go back south.

The same Chipewyan are also familiar with a network of "lookout" sites on top of prominent ridges and hills where, alledgedly, their ancestors monitored the movements of encroaching Cree. These surveillance points stretch northward from the Churchill River more than 120 miles to the vicinity of Cree Lake. Occasionally, the Chipewyan fear of *ena* (Cree or "enemy") disrupted normal trading operations, as indicated by the observations of the Hudson's Bay Company post manager at Ile a la Crosse in 1839 (PAC HBC B.89/a/19):

> I am sorry to remark that I did not find the affairs of the post in such good order as I had expected – very little hay made for the cattle and scarcely any provisions collected. The Chipewyans did not hunt for provisions as usual being afraid of bad Indians or Enemies, as they generally are, everything they see or hear, are bad Indians and (they) are alarmed.

Patterned avoidance behavior is an expression of Chipewyan deference toward the economically dominant Cree, and it characterizes the semi-permeable boundary between them. Chipewyan movements into predominantly Cree areas demanded considerable caution and expense, while Cree penetrations into Chipewyan locales received little resistance. The references to "observers" in the tale *Dog's Hind Leg*, and to Cree "hunting" in *Segalaze and the Cree*, reflect this tradition of surveillance and avoidance.

Social stratification in the trade system also was expressed in the rapid growth of a Metis Cree working class and in the prominence of the Cree language in mixed ethnic settings. A growing Metis population in the Upper Churchill drainage in the mid and late nineteenth century was largely a product of unions between local Cree women and French-Canadian male fur trade personnel. Some of these Metis Cree became field agents and outpost managers for the Hudson's Bay Company and for the short-lived Revillon Freres company during the early twentieth century. In many instances these Cree-speaking men were given assignments to manage the trade among wintering groups of Chipewyan, and frequently their marriage to local Chipewyan women facilitated such operations. Arrangements

of this kind were common as recently as the 1930s and 1940s (Jarvenpa, Brumbach and Buell 1980: 90-114). Moreover, it is interesting that more than one of these historical figures has an unsavory reputation among local Chipewyan today. Some of the Metis Cree traders are remembered as deceitful and stingy charlatans or as frightful, autocratic bullies.

It is likely that as the Metis Cree became integrated into the lower managerial ranks of the fur industry, that the Cree language was becoming a lingua franca between Indian groups. Communication between older Chipewyan and Cree residents in the Upper Churchill settlements continues to be conducted in the common medium of Cree. It is suggested, then, that asymmetrical marriage patterns and language use form another dimension of economic and social dominance in the fur trade, and that the Chipewyan had few alternatives other than learning Cree speech to maintain a position in the expanding trade. While these specific relationships are not directly or overtly expressed in the conflict lore, the formidability of the Cree is a strong and prevailing theme in most of the tales.

With the continuing economic development of the subarctic frontier in this century, interactions between Chipewyan and Cree have increased, and a range of cooperative behaviors, including intermarriage, have emerged. The tale *Chipewyan/Cree Peace Pact* symbolizes the development of positive relations, but as has been noted, this lone tale appears almost as a footnote to the heavy emphasis on negative relations. More intriguing is the area of magico-medicinal behavior. The Chipewyan and Cree of the Upper Churchill region have evolved a system of interdependencies that rests upon the *complementarity* of cultural differences, to use Barth's (1969: 18-19) concept. Presently, the Cree have recognized superiority in curing and divination. The Chipewyan, typically the middle-aged and elderly, find themselves in need of these services which they cannot perform, and they seek out and pay for the medicinal and supernatural treatment of illness by Cree medicine men and women. Thus, Cree-Chipewyan/patron-client relationships constitute a form of social organization that articulates a service with a need and at the same time perpetuates a societal or ethnic boundary. While the Chipewyan openly express their respect for Cree prowess in magical and medicinal knowledge, this recognition also becomes a point of vulnerability because there is fear of the negative applica-

tions of "medicine" in sorcery. The southern Chipewyan believe that powerful Cree can initiate or facilitate misfortune, illness or death by "working medicine against" someone (Jarvenpa 1978: 29-33). This places the Chipewyan in the uncomfortable position of having to seek protection from the same class of specialists that has the ability to create misfortune.

Magico-medicinal relations, then, are far from symbiotic or mutualistic. As the overt uses of *inkonze* (supernatural knowledge and power) and the *inkonzedene* (Chipewyan "shadow people," "magicians," or shamans) have diminished among the southern Chipewyan, their dependency upon Cree magico-medicinal specialists has increased. It is likely that some of the conflict lore functions as a counterpoint to or a negation of this dependency. In two of the tales the powerful Chipewyan magician Labidsas defeats a Cree medicine woman of fearsome reputation. It is interesting, however, that the Chipewyan magicians in *The Magic Glass* ultimately prove ineffective against Cree opponents and are saved by a fur trapper. The latter tale serves as a commentary, perhaps, on the historical decline of Chipewyan magico-religious practices.[7]

It is worth noting here that one form of adversive medicine which generates considerable anxiety for the Chipewyan is the Cree kidnapping and seduction of Chipewyan women through "love magic" or "love medicine." This has been the case historically for the southern Chipewyan, and even in the contemporary period distressing incidents involving missing women have been interpreted as products of Cree malevolent magic.

The theme of woman capture or seduction is not very well developed in the Patuanak oral lore, however. It is true that *Dineldare* becomes a captive of Cree enemies in the tale *Dog's Hind Leg*, but there is no obvious indication of magical manipulation or of sexual interest. The earlier collections of Birket-Smith (1930: 95), Lowie (1912: 193) and Petitot (1886: 398) contain variants of a tale in which two Chipewyan sisters are abducted by the Cree and ultimately are rescued by the stealth and magical power of their

[7] For a full discussion of the magico-religious beliefs of the Fort Resolution Chipewyan, see Smith (1973).

brother. These "stolen sisters" narratives more directly reflect a concern with aggression against women.[8]

CONCLUSIONS

At this point it is appropriate to return to several issues raised at the beginning of this paper. First, are tales of inter-group hostility reflective commentaries upon historical events? Generally speaking this is true. Chipewyan conflict lore may not be dispassionate documentary history, but neither is it the product of random cognitive processes. Rather, it bears a systematic relationship to actual behavior, including the manner in which Chipewyan and Cree populations have competed for food, marketable furs and territory, among other things. It is plausible that the intensity of inter-group conflicts in the Upper Churchill region accounts for the relative preponderance of conflict lore in southern Chipewyan communities.

Secondly, are conflict tales subtle indicators of ongoing attitudes and behavior? Again, an affirmative answer is in order because the folklore is attuned to persisting and emerging relationships between Chipewyan and Cree. While the overt hostilities of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have largely subsided, they have been replaced by "cooperative" interactions, such as magico-medicinal relations, that generate feelings of ambivalence and supernatural vulnerability for the Chipewyan. It is likely that conflict lore featuring sorcery / counter-sorcery themes, for example, is a statement of threatening conditions in both past and present circumstances.

Finally, does conflict lore function to justify and perpetuate cultural differences? To the extent that such lore continues to occupy a prominent position in Chipewyan oral tradition, it symbolically draws a cultural boundary between Chipewyan and Cree.

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[8] The earlier folklore collections, deriving from more northerly locations, also portray abduction and marriage of Chipewyan women to Eskimo captors (Birket-Smith 1930: 96, Curtis 1928: 127, Goddard 1912: 52, Petitot 1886: 412). However, this behavior is invariably a preface to the central theme of discovery of copper metal. Goddard (1916) also collected extensive folktale material among the Beaver Indians, neighboring Athapaskan-speakers in northern Alberta. Many of the Beaver tales involve hostile conflicts with Cree, including the abduction of Beaver women.

The impact of this symbolism on attitudes, or the formation of negative attitudes toward the out-group, is far-reaching because the imagery is often intensely antagonistic. Repeated exposure to such imagery is a form of ethnocentric conditioning. Moreover, negative imagery appears regularly in a variety of structured contexts outside the domain of oral literature, particularly in elaborate jokes or ruses where unfamiliar Chipewyan individuals are introduced as *ena* or Cree with the idea of creating tension and discomfort among the Chipewyan recipients of the joke. Ostensibly, such joking behavior is a form of entertainment, at least for the perpetrators. Here, however, people are being entertained by their fears and uncertainties. These negative attitudes are brought into sharp focus by a contrived social situation. Like the conflict lore, the Cree stranger ruse serves as a symbolic reminder of real life social relations that are harmful or unpleasant, and the allusion to an innate and ever-present Chipewyan/Cree enmity reinforces the cultural boundary between them.

A departing thought relates to the matter of accuracy. That is, oral folklore may reflect historical and ongoing behavior *without accurately* representing such behavior. Obviously, the conflict lore is a biased account of behavior, a tangible projection of goals and desires, expressed through the symbols of Chipewyan culture. This is readily seen by referring to the previous discussion of conflict tales as lessons in problem-solving. To function in this manner the conflict lore invariably portrays the Chipewyan as victorious in their confrontations with the Cree. Yet, this is not historically true. Rather, the Cree have maintained a position of socio-economic dominance over the Chipewyan.

The question regarding accuracy is not a trivial one. Without adequate independent knowledge of the nature of Chipewyan/Cree relations in past and present circumstances, it is difficult to recognize connections between symbolic statements and actual social behavior. Toward this end my colleagues and I are involved in ethno-archaeological and ethnohistorical research on changing material and social relationships between Chipewyan, Cree, Metis and EuroCanadian groups in central Canada (Brumbach, Jarvenpa and Buell 1982). As this work progresses, it is hoped that folklore materials from Cree communities will permit a discussion of inter-ethnic imagery that is less one-sided than this one.

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APPENDIX

1. *Labidsas Under Water*

That *Labidsas* had strong medicine. One time he went under water for three days. The people saw him go under water, and he didn't come up for three days. Cree Indians were always trying to get after him, but he always knows what is coming up against him. He was powerful. A Cree medicine woman was against him. Every time he tried to eat something it turned to sand. He knew she was doing it, so he went under water. The sand was making him sick, so to cure himself he goes under the lake for three days, and that way he beat the Cree woman.

2. *Eredk'ali and the Cree*

Eredk'ali was a man who lived for 300 years. For the first 100 years he was a wolf before he became a man. J. B. Solomon once met him, and many of the Chipewyan people around here are related to him. That *Eredk'ali* was real experienced, you know. He did so much it took a long time to tell how he began and his life story. It would take two days to tell. He would start telling it, and people would fall asleep after awhile because it was so long. But it was interesting, still interesting, but so long that people start falling asleep. He was famous because he fought the Cree. As a man, the Cree were after him all the time, but *Eredk'ali* was too fast, too smart. One time the Cree were after him, you know, and he ran right across a valley between two hills. He didn't even touch the ground. That's how fast he was, super-like. That's how he got his name. That's what *Eredk'ali* means, "to go across," like those hills, but in the air. *Eredk'ali* means "to go across, flying," or "to go flying across."

3. *Segalaze and the Cree*

Segalaze was a Chipewyan man with fast legs who could run across a lake in the winter so fast he would look like a blur, like the *Flash* in those comics, you know. He was just a little guy, and he used to wear a fur thing around his neck, like *Superman*

I guess, a cape made of fur. There are some old people who saw him, so we know it was this way, you know. Well, a long time ago he would travel with the people. Sometimes they would be out hunting for Cree Indians, not really hunting, but just looking around to see where they were. And when they traveled, *Segalaze* always stayed behind in back of the group. He never walked in front. One time they ran into some Cree Indians. When they got close, *Segalaze* ran out in front. He had a little spear, and he just went around and in and out between all those Cree so fast. The old people say he looked like 20 different people he was so fast. And he killed all those Cree like that.

Another time the people were walking up a big hill. When they got to the top there were two grizzly bears there. The people were scared, but *Segalaze* was in back again. He loosened up his cape, and he ran ahead to those grizzly bears and ran around them real fast. Pretty soon all you could see was just dust. He must have had some kind of medicine for that because there was no dirt there. And when the dust cleared away those bears were dead.

I'll bet if Segalaze were alive now he could beat Cassius Clay, anybody. He would be a champion, huh? In any sport: boxing, hockey, football, soccer, anything. He would be the champion.

4. *The Island*

(see Introduction to this article for text)

5. *Labidsas and the Old Cree Woman*

There were some Chipewyan men around here that used to go up and down the river (Churchill River) on a barge bringing supplies to the villages. Every time they stopped at a certain village an old Cree woman, who was a powerful medicine woman and magician, would walk down to the barge and hold out a pan to the men. Usually they would put something in the pan, like flour or lard, because they were afraid the old woman might work magic against them. But there was a Chipewyan man named *Labidsas* from another village. He was the most powerful Chipewyan medicine man and curer. When he heard about the Cree woman and her threats he told the men on the barge that he wanted to go with them on their next trip and that he would beat the woman in magic.

The next time the barge stopped at the Cree village the old woman walked down to the river and held out her pan. But this time *Labidsas* was there, and he beat her away with a stick saying: "I will give you nothing." The Cree woman was very angry, and she told *Labidsas* and the men: "Three bad things will happen to you before you reach your home." Soon the men were traveling across a big lake (an expansion of the river), and *Labidsas* could feel that something bad was about to happen. He knew what the danger would be. Suddenly a big wind came and large waves that were going to break the barge, but *Labidsas* stopped this with his power.

Before reaching their home village the men stopped to make an overnight camp. *Labidsas* shared a tent with two other men. That night again he could feel that something bad was about to happen, and again he knew what the danger would be. He told the other men that he would sleep by himself about 15 yards from their tent. This he did, and as soon as he lay down two wolves approached him. But already he knew they were coming. Before the wolves could harm him *Labidsas* killed them right on the spot with his magic.

The next day as the men approached their village another large wind blew up. But this time *Labidsas* could not figure out what was coming. Suddenly a fish hook entered his penis, and he was filled with great pain. He asked the people to set up his little tent. He went into the tent where he had hanging the skins of all his animal helpers. Here he could talk with all these animals and ask for their help. *Labidsas* called out to the weasel and the marten, but they could not remove the fish hook. In turn, he called out to each kind of animal, but none could help. *Labidsas* knew that he would die if he did not get help, but he had talked with all the animal helpers. Then he remembered the wolverine. He had forgotten him. He summoned the wolverine who was able to remove the fish hook. Then *Labidsas* sent the hook back to the old Cree woman. She was sitting on the ground fixing her fishing nets with her legs crossed in front of her. The hook traveled through the earth, and it came up beneath the woman and entered her vagina. *Labidsas* made this object of two fish hooks tied together so that removing one hook only pushed the other one deeper. The old Cree woman screamed out in pain: "aiyayei!," and fell backwards on the ground where she died right away.

6. *Dog's Hind Leg*

Long before white men came into the country the Chipewyan people were caught in between the Cree to the south and the Slaveys and Dogribs to the northwest. Then the white fur traders came here from the south. They traded mainly with the Cree, but sometimes the Chipewyan traveled south to capture some of the trade because the only real fur post in the area was at Churchill on Hudson Bay. The Hudson's Bay Company traders brought the first guns into the country, but these went to the Cree first. The Chipewyan had no knowledge of guns at that time. They had not seen a white man.

On one of their trips south the Chipewyan were attacked by Cree using guns. The Cree killed everyone except a small Chipewyan girl. The Cree took her as a slave, and she became known as *Dineldare*, "slave woman." She remained a slave of the Cree but grew to be a beautiful woman. The Cree were greedy. They wanted the whole fur trade for themselves. So one day they traveled to "the wall that opens and closes," the big fort at Churchill. They asked the white trader there to given them some guns so that they could kill off all the Chipewyan people to the north. They told the trader that the Chipewyan were savage beasts who were ruining the fur trade. *Dineldare* was left outside the fort. She never saw the white man's house before, so she walked to the gate to look inside. The trader saw her standing there, and because she was so beautiful, he asked the Cree who she was. They told thim that she was only a Chipewyan slave. The trader was very surprised. This was the first Chipewyan he had seen, and he told the Cree that if this woman was an example of the Chipewyan people he would not give them guns to kill the Chipewyan.

The trader set *Dineldare* free. This was winter time, and she had to walk far to the north and west to find her own people. In those days the Chipewyan people had "observers." These were special men trained to run long distances between camps to bring news. They would sit on high ridges where they could watch the main trails across the lakes. If they saw people approaching, they would run to the camps to tell everybody. Well, the "observers" saw *Dineldare* coming, but they had to be careful. They didn't know who she was. So they crawled beneath the snow close to the trail where she walked, and they saw it was a beautiful woman.

Dineldare showed her people how to get to the big fort on Hudson Bay, and this was how the fur trade spread north to the Chipewyan. They also got guns at that time. But the first time the Chipewyan saw guns among their Cree enemies they didn't know what they were. To their eyes the shape of the gun stock was like a dog's hind leg, and that's what they thought they were. That's why they called a gun "dog's hind leg."

7. *The Magic Glass*

Once there was a trapper around here. He worked real hard and caught a lot of fur. But in the spring, when he was about to sell his fur, someone told him that he should go to the store on Hudson Bay instead of the local post. So the man traveled hard for a long time until he came to the ocean at Hudson Bay. Here he sold his fur to the manager of the store. The manager was glad to have fur from a trapper from so far away and gave him a good price. When the trapper was about to return to his own country upriver, the manager went up to him and said: "I am so glad that you came from so far away to sell your fur here, and I have a present for you." The manager gave him something he had never seen before. It was a magnifying glass. The manager told the trapper that the gift came from across the sea, from England, and he showed him how it could make fire by holding it against the sunlight. The trapper put the glass in the chest pocket of his shirt and sewed it shut so that he would not lose the special gift. Then he traveled back to his home area.

When he was approaching his home country the trapper came upon two of his own Chipewyan people. These two men were magicians or *inkonzedene*. These were the people who could talk to each other from a long way. They would get inside their little tents and talk to each other, and they could tell what was happening up ahead. Just like today we have telephones to talk to each other, in the old days they had magicians. These magicians asked the trapper to go with them to steal horses from some Cree who were camped to the south. They traveled together, and after some time the magicians set up their tents. In this way they could tell that some Cree Indians were camped close ahead and that they had many horses. But the Cree had their own magicians who knew that the three Chipewyan men were approaching, and for this reason the

Cree could surround them. The three men were taken as prisoners, and they were going to be killed the next day at a special feast. But first the chief of the Cree came into the tent where the men were held and told them he would let them go if they could beat him in magic.

The first thing the chief did was smoke a pipe, and as he puffed, blood dripped from the bottom of the pipe bowl. The chief passed it to one of the Chipewyan magicians. He smoked it and also made blood drip from its bottom. Next, the Cree chief removed his feet from his legs and then walked about the tent before causing his feet to rejoin his legs. But the other Chipewyan magician was able to remove his feet in the same way. The third thing the Cree chief did was spread a white cloth before him. Then he pulled his eyes out of his head and placed them on the cloth, and then he put his eyes back in his head again. One of the Chipewyan magicians tried hard to do this but could not. The other magician also failed, and the trapper could not remove his eyes. So it was certain that the three men would be killed by the Cree the next day. The two magicians asked the trapper if he could think of anything to save them, but he could not.

The next day the three Chipewyan men were brought before the Cree chief and his people to be killed. Suddenly the trapper remembered the magnifying glass sewn into his shirt pocket. He removed it, and then held it up to the sun and caught enough light to make fire in the chief's pipe. The chief and the other Cree were surprised and scared because they had never seen a magnifying glass. Then the chief offered the three men their freedom and half of his herd of 84 horses if he could have the glass. But the trapper replied: "This glass is a gift from the sun. It gives me the power to burn down the whole country around here and you people as well. Unless you let us go now and give us half of your horses, I will kill you all by fire." So the Cree set the Chipewyan men free, and they traveled back to their own country safely with the horses.

8. *Raven-Head (DatsaΘi)*

DatsaΘi was a man who used to help the Chipewyan fight the Cree Indians in the old days, you know. He was real good that way. But that was one day. On another day he might help

the Cree against the Chipewyan. That's the way he was, you know. You could never be sure which way he would be.

9. *Chipewyan / Cree Peace Pact*

Long time ago the Chipewyan people were still fighting the Indians, you know, the Cree Indians. And one time the Chipewyan people found a tall tree with eagles in it, young eagles. The Chipewyan found it first. But almost at the same time, just a little bit later, some of the Cree Indians found the same tree with the young eagles. But they didn't know about each other, the Chipewyan and the Cree didn't see each other. And they both wanted those eagles, you know, because they have good feathers for arrows. So they went away from that place and came back a while later when those eagles were older, just getting ready to fly. The feathers are just right then.

So one Cree Indian sneaks up through the bush slowly at night, and he found this kind of flat rock area, like a cave, and he stayed there. He will wait until morning to get the eagle. But at the same time a Chipewyan Indian was coming the other way, sneaking up to that tree. And he crawled right up to where the Cree man was sleeping. That's how they got to know each other, you know. They just slept together right there that night. Next day they decided to make peace, a peace pact. So they called all the Cree people and Chipewyan people together for a peace conference like, you know, and they decided for no more war, no more fighting after that time. That's how the Chipewyan and the Cree people came to be friends.