INTRODUCTION: REFLECTIONS ON TERRITORIALITY

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Our problem is, and will continue to be, raising the level of debate on the nature of Northern Algonquian "family hunting territories." The debate traces back to Frank Speck, who began fieldwork on the north shore of the St. Lawrence River in 1908 and continued through the 1930s, when his data were corroborated by John M. Cooper's, for the James Bay region. Since publication of Leacock's 1954 monograph, based on fieldwork in 1950 and critical of the Speck-Cooper hypothesis, we have developed a debate that draws its complexity from regional and historical variations, the practical and ideological needs of native land claims, the entry of "critical theory" and ecological methods in ethnology, and the growing intellectual heterogeneity of anthropology.

In consequence, we are faced with several different rationalizations of the Northern Algonquian attitude to ownership, specifically of territory. As we all know, establishing the historical processes of core concepts like property is an ambitious goal and in this instance has led to protracted controversy. Writers have often premised their argument on a particular understanding of our limited data, or what the Indians of the past would likely have done or thought. We cannot help but oversimplify actual behavior, thoughts, and feelings as we generalize, and this is likely to result in assumptions about simplified or "characteristic" Indian attitudes that relate to getting a living on the land.

Tanner's paper leads us through samples of classic anthropological types of explanation: old quotes (that prove our point about territoriality), deductive reasoning (if conditions were thus, consequences would surely be . . .), "authenticity" (territories emerged from within the native culture and are not an artifact of external relations), "alienation" (territories emerged, but forced by the trauma of domination), "multiple empirical systems," and, finally, the question of whether what we can find now (since we do not know about the origins) is historically plausible by virtue of being well integrated with the culture. Here again, we are directed to the need for adequate data to obtain specific processes and relations. Tanner's discussion of property and of the relations of households provides a much-needed theoretical corrective to the literature. He also labors over the relationship of Leacock and Marx in view of what Marx really said.

Bishop, searching for the origins of different forms of territoriality, emphasizes sociopolitical and ideological factors (among Indians of both the St. Lawrence-Great Lakes region and

the eastern Subarctic) and argues plausibly that there were precontact cultures with territoriality of some kind. With a general and comparative method, employing ethnohistoric data, he makes a "should" argument (if I were an Indian, I should have . . .) about animal harvesting and overharvesting, based on cost-benefit analysis, and a "might" argument (if I had been an Indian in that situation, I might have . . .) about territories developing for defense of ground, in both pre- and postcontact exchanges. A sense of (collective) territory seems to be a necessary precondition to the particular form of exchange Bishop calls "passage tax," whereby one group expects compensation for allowing another group to pass through its country. This is one example of a need to protect and claim recognition of rights to a valuable resource (prestige and/or property). In general, Bishop finds that native cost-benefit attitudes often come down heavily in favor of short-term benefits and (unfortunately) at objectively rather high costs.

Morantz asks what non-Indians on the east coast of James Bay, writing what have become historical documents during the fur trade period, were thinking and saying about what the Indians were doing, that we may relate to the issue of territories. She finds a rather remarkable continuity on essentials. Trapping for exchange, hunting group size, debt to individuals, trespass, private ownership, and conservation all appear fairly early in the records (during the eighteenth century), and continue to appear. In the nineteenth century, there is clear and sufficient evidence for territories. Of course, the retort may be made that the earlier fur trade was sufficiently dynamic to bring all of this about. Morantz provides specific ethnohistoric data to supplement, and sometimes persuasively correct, later interpretations of ethnographic and ecological data. The continuity that Morantz finds is comparable to that found in settlement pattern and tool-kit data of the archeology of the region. Morantz emphasizes historical changes in collective wisdom, including both ours and theirs, with regard to territoriality, property, and so on: collective wisdom is adaptable—it may and does vary on a central theme or cultural pattern to suit circumstances, such as ecological differences or the European trade.

Mailhot's essay urges us to think in dynamic behavioral terms rather than in structural terms; the value of this approach is also seen in Scott's essay. There are (now, and probably in the past) no individual territories for Mailhot's area (overlapping that studied by Leacock), but rather an ideology of mobility. This is reflected in rejections of the question when people were asked about individual ownership of territory. This is also where we hear the comment, "I can trap anywhere." It would be easy to understand this statement as claiming that there is no problem of exclusivity of access to land, no problem or even conception of trespass. Perhaps then there is no selection of who may legitimately hunt where, and no organization in people's

apportioning themselves on the land. Territoriality risks becoming merely our preoccupation and our delusion.

Mailhot's extensive data show that there is, instead, a socially "structured mobility" comparable to Sieciechowicz's argument on kinship and economics at Kasabonika Lake. Any given individual is not going to trap "anywhere." Instead, he or she (in many areas of the north, some widows or other unmarried women were known as good trappers) will trap only in some places, selection of which is negotiable annually in terms of social ties of kinship, affinity, congeniality, and practicality. Thus there is more negotiability than most authors have recognized in the past. *Social negotiation* is the crucial characteristic of native psychology for determining territoriality—how best to allocate or use kinship so as to obtain and distribute food and furs congenially and effectively. This point comes out in Sieciechowicz's paper as well—with so much variation, we are not going to get much more than cumulative error by talking too abstractly about territoriality. We must look at actual cases and processes in order to make sense of our main query.

Flannery and Chambers do what is urgently needed: review one major contributor (Cooper) to see how his published materials relate to his own field data. In a thorough and judicious update, they establish the different time lines, which stretch well back into the nineteenth century, as well as the differential adequacy of the various reports given to Cooper. They then blend this with Flannery's own data on related topics and synthesize a revision of Cooper's statement, including maps. We would benefit greatly from comparable examinations of the data base on which others, including Speck, Leacock, and Knight, have built their arguments. Here, we are given a characterization of the data and a persuasive restatement in a scholarly tone that recalls Cooper's original. I detect in this essay an authorial tone approximating the characteristic Indian attitude of pragmatic accommodation to external factors.

Berkes is concerned more with general ecological principles than with native concepts and provides an interesting (although perhaps determinist) model. He uses cost-benefit analysis as an analytical principle. The social scale of territorial groups that control access to and stewardship of an area will generally fluctuate as an inverse function of the intensity with which people pursue the more predictable, abundant, and desirable food-animal resources. Berkes is the only non-anthropologist in this volume —he is a biologist. In consequence, Indian attitudes tend to be implicit rather than explicit in his analysis.

Scott's essay examines activities in the 1980s. I find this method extremely persuasive and refreshing. Scott gives us several contemporary contexts of territoriality and emphasizes the importance to the Cree of knowledge about the characteristics of

game. Different kinds of hunting require appropriately varying strategies, and people who know a great deal about these are likely to be the hunting bosses. Here, the concept of ownership, mistakenly and ethnocentrically construed in early papers based on acculturation theory, is given a radically ethnographic definition. Being an "owner" or "boss" implies an active relationship of knowledge, coordination of others' activities, and caring and providing, whether as parent to child or hunting leader to group. Scott implies that hunting knowledge is *embodied in action* that yields success, which yields respect, which in turn gets a person the position of "boss," in new situations where coordination is important. Scott premises a Cree psychology in which knowledge is power or control, with the moral purpose of nurturing the common good.

Craik's essay reviews Speck, Leacock, Davidson, and other major contributors and says that although we have used both the culture area approach and systemic studies, precise ethnographic understanding has been lacking and is badly needed. Craik shows that "I can trap anywhere" is not necessarily a concrete statement of practical strategy but rather a subtle, social (rather than ecological) comment. If a person *did* refer to a place where he or she could not trap, the person was socially "in trouble" and excluded from joining one or more hunting groups. Perhaps, for example, as Craik said during the conference discussion period, he could not trap in his father-in-law's group because he did not get along with him. It is a social comment rather than a literal statement about "where I have trapped, or where I am likely to trap in the future." The native psychology emphasized by Craik is characterized by planning strategies in terms of past performance and future preferences.

Sieciechowicz, like Scott, describes the contemporary case. Her emphasis is on the continuing interplay between kin relations and land stewardship, and the results are both multiple and gradual. That is, environmental factors are mediated through variables of kinship and economics, resulting in a wide range of social scale (hunting group)/land tenure (territory) forms, which wax and wane over time. From her two village cases, Sieciechowicz hypothesizes a more or less cyclical transformation in kinship and economics from expanded (communal, as in her Kasibonika Lake case) to compressed (individualized, as in Wunnummin Lake) relations. The variation occurs in response to fluctuating exogenous factors, such as environmental supply of animals and fur trade and government intervention. A case for cultural drift, first outlined by Sapir (1921:147-170), is latent here.

In summing up this volume, I suggest that there is an issue that most of us who have written on this topic (except Flannery and Chambers) have not adequately considered. Many authors fail to evaluate painstakingly not just method and theory but also the specific *empirical* bases for *other* anthropologists' arguments. We

have heard repeated references to Knight and Leacock, who have made, or who have been used by others to make, very large claims on the basis of a youthful summer's fieldwork. Data obtained in a short time may be important and reliable, but the possibility is great that they may not be. A strong, general, abstract argument may, and probably will, overwork its restricted basis in empirical knowledge.

Most of the essays here are the reports of people who have made relatively small claims on the basis of much more precise and extensive fieldwork. This highlights a real imbalance in the territoriality debate between what an author knows, specifically and for certain, and what he or she claims is generally the case. By painstakingly and critically assessing the empirical grounding of each author's claims, we can improve the level of debate and the adequacy of our explanations.

Where will the improvement lead us? What are we trying to find out? As Murphy (1971:35) quips, we may have been arguing about the answers for so long that we have forgotten the questions. What is, and was, actually going on, in terms of "territoriality"? By what patterned moral attitudes and decisions, or cultural rules, have Northern Algonquian peoples, throughout history, construed their environment as relations to a specified place, as relations to specified subsistence events, and as relations to specified persons and groups?

I think that this is what we are trying to find out. We are in search of subtle, historico-ethnographic knowledge. We must discern characteristic or patterned native behavior and statements, including some that may not normally be given in direct response to questions, as well as some knowledge that (like the rules of kinship or grammar) is not necessarily put into words, and is perhaps embodied more in attitude and action than in conscious thought or reflection.

In other words, part of the knowledge we seek is psychologically deep: notions imbedded in many specific practical actions, combined in memory and, perhaps, like rules of kinship or grammar, only implicitly known (and not analyzed into conceptions), responded to as intuitively correct in daily life, and little reported to others. This makes our data, and our interpretation of them, problematic, whether they are archival or ethnographic. What we are given explicitly is the statement "I can trap anywhere." We must get to the implicit "I can say that I get along well enough with the people here to consider the possibility of eventually wintering with any of these local groups." This indicates the social context of our query and is only the beginning of its conceptual answer.

Perhaps this is the place to summarize the collective wisdom of these essays with regard to some psychological characteristics

of the Northern Algonquians. We have more or less explicit suggestions of:

1. an adaptable collective wisdom;
2. readiness for pragmatic accommodation to external factors;
3. cost-benefit attitudes that often come down heavily in terms of short-term benefits;
4. a sense that knowledge is power or control; and
5. an expectation of negotiability in personal relations, characterized by planning strategies in terms of past performance and future preferences.

These seem to me a fairly credible scope and characterization of some of the psychology of Northern Algonquian cultures. Taken as a whole, our authors have a fair collective wisdom, or at least intuition, regarding the people they describe.

We also get conceptions about actions, ideals, or rights constituting a sense of property. We are trying to find the basis on which property (recall Tanner's commentary on the meaning of the word) and sharing incorporate some cultural principles of organization and selection, emphasizing particularly people and food, and also myriad and variable secondary elaborations according to time and place. This is where the complexity sets in, as it certainly should. The question "Were family hunting grounds aboriginal?" now appears too general and too simplistic. We cannot give a good answer without deconstructing the question, fundamentally reconceptualizing it, and, in the process, addressing the real complexities that the old question has revealed.

These essays have addressed several aspects of this complexity. When game is manageable, and the extreme example is Scott's case of geese, people may use elegant management systems. When people are manageable, and the extreme example is Sieciechowicz's Kasabonika Lake, people may enjoy the luxury of being little organized against trespassing. When other people, however, are a problem, people may use defense systems against trespass, as Bishop points out.

Clearly, people will have different, but nonetheless patterned, opinions about what those rules are today and were in the past. We have variable opinions about rules, and so do Northern Algonquians. As Sieciechowicz showed us, half of the people may leave the community on the death of the leader, and the other half may stay. Half think or intuit that one way of acting is best; the others believe that another way is best. A similar variance within cultural consensus is found with us, as our continuing debate on the nature of property shows.

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