
Pentecostalism and Indigenous Culture in Northern North America

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Abstract: Pentecostalism is a major movement among North American Indigenous people, yet, until recently, anthropologists largely ignored it. Mainly since 2001, a small body of literature, focusing largely on Northern North America, has addressed this phenomenon, largely with the intent of either showing that Pentecostalism is irrevocably against the Indigenous culture, or, conversely, embedded within it. I present and summarize primary field data from northern Alberta, while also synthesizing theoretical and empirical contributions from other scholars working on Pentecostalism in Indigenous communities. I critique and problematize particularly the suggestion of Kirk Dombrowski (2001) that Pentecostalism is largely “against” Indigenous culture.

Keywords: Pentecostalism, Cree, Alberta, culture, Indigenous Peoples, Northern North America

Résumé : Le pentecôtisme est un mouvement majeur chez les peuples autochtones d'Amérique du Nord, et pourtant, jusqu'à récemment, les anthropologues ne s'y sont pas beaucoup intéressés. Depuis 2001 principalement, un petit corpus de publications, portant particulièrement sur le nord du continent, s'est concentré sur ce phénomène, avec surtout l'intention de montrer que le pentecôtisme est irrévocablement en opposition avec la culture autochtone, ou à l'inverse, qu'il est bien intégré dans celle-ci. Je présente et résume des données de terrain primaires en provenance du Nord de l'Alberta, tout en faisant la synthèse de contributions théoriques et empiriques d'autres universitaires travaillant sur le pentecôtisme dans les communautés autochtones. Je critique et remets particulièrement en question la suggestion de Kirk Dombrowski (2001) qui veut que le pentecôtisme soit principalement « contre » la culture autochtone.

Mots-clés : pentecôtisme, Cris, Alberta, culture, peuples autochtones, Nord de l'Amérique du Nord

Introduction

In this article, I interpret and summarize data collected on Pentecostal practices by anthropologists working in northern North American Indigenous communities, including data I collected during ethnographic research among Pentecostals in Cree-speaking communities of northern Alberta since 2005. I review these data and comment on their theoretical implications to show how Pentecostalism has become part of Indigenous culture in many communities of northern North America over the past few decades. I develop this perspective in part to critique the analysis of Kirk Dombrowski (2001), who, based on fieldwork in southeast Alaska, states that Indigenous Pentecostals and other Evangelical Christians are frequently “against culture,” are most often from the socio-economic margins of Indigenous society, and are generally opposed to Indigenous political and identity projects. In countering this argument, my purpose here is not so much to put forward a new theoretical argument about the nature of culture or conversion to Pentecostalism (see Westman 2012b), as to document and compare existing empirical evidence on an understudied new religious movement—Pentecostalism, as adapted among northern Indigenous people of North America—and to sketch the development of, and differences within, a small but notable new body of ethnographic literature on this topic and region. While there are contrasts between the studies I discuss, which range from the Eastern Arctic, across the Subarctic, through to Southeast Alaska, there are also deep similarities in the historical articulation of these circumpolar foraging communities with broader settler societies. Moreover, the very ongoing encounter with Pentecostalism in these communities provides both common grounds of experience and points for analytical contrast on a regional basis. Finally, the continued strength of diverse traditions of animism and shamanism in northern North America means that the experience of Pentecostalism in these communities is coloured by, or

reactive to, such traditions. Documenting such religious pluralism is of interest for Pentecostal studies as well as northern ethnology.

My intention in this article is neither to defend nor attack either Indigenous Pentecostals or Pentecostalism in general, but rather to sketch out the ethnographic context of Indigenous Pentecostalism in the contemporary north through discussion of recent data and analysis. Specifically, I show that in the spiritual context of Indigenous people's lived experience, what Pentecostalism offers is hope, salvation, and an experiential way out of and beyond the fear of damnation, curses and bad medicine, goals which are in fact to some degree consistent with traditional animist belief and experience, although Pentecostal salvation also typically endorses some forms of pronounced distance from animism. Thus, in this article, I suggest that Pentecostalism may be seen as embedded within, rather than necessarily arrayed against, Indigenous cultures.

Indigenous Pentecostalism: A Demographic Phenomenon and a Research Gap

The 2001 census recorded that over half of the population of Trout Lake, Alberta and one third of the population of nearby Peerless Lake, Alberta (my two primary field sites) were Pentecostals. Many other Aboriginal communities in the central region of northern Alberta also have relatively high levels (though generally not so high as Trout Lake) of Pentecostal affiliation (Westman 2008:253-254). The rapid growth of Pentecostalism in Trout Lake since the late 1960s is not exceptional globally or within the Canadian north. Indeed, levels of Pentecostal adherence above 50 per cent are seen in many northern Canadian Aboriginal communities, particularly in northern Quebec and Nunavut. Harvey Cox (1995) and Joel Robbins (2004) document the global success with which Pentecostalism, a tradition within Evangelical Protestantism promoting the ecstatic spiritual gifts of the early church, has adapted to new cultural contexts.¹

Nationally, in Canada (c. 2001), the proportion of Pentecostal adherents among Aboriginal people was over three times that of the near 1 per cent level of Pentecostal adherence seen in the total national population (Burkinshaw 2009:142). By 2001, a trend whereby the percentage of Pentecostals among Aboriginal people had continued to increase, while the general national level of Pentecostal adherence stagnated, had been evident in Canada since 1981 (Noll 1992:471). It appears that Pentecostalism is especially appealing to Aboriginal people in the north, where, in most cases, Pentecostal missions did not begin until the 1960s or 1970s, although Pentecostalism has been

represented among Indigenous people for over a century in both Canada and the USA. Today there are hundreds of Indigenous Pentecostal congregations in the USA (Saggio 2009) and Canada (Guenther 2008:390). Nevertheless, a gap in systematic research on Pentecostal and Evangelical Christianity among Indigenous people exists in both Canada (Burkinshaw 2009:142) and the USA (Tarango 2009b:27).

Contemporary scholars writing on northern Pentecostalism represent an important new wave that will enhance both ethnographic and theoretical understandings of this movement, given the paucity of research to date. The gap in research regarding Indigenous Pentecostalism was most notable prior to 2000; I will discuss a number of important studies to appear since 2001 and especially since 2005. Nevertheless, the research gap is still quite striking in relation to the importance of this social movement in a heavily studied cultural region. Joel Robbins confirms the existence of such lacunae in ethnographic research on Pentecostals worldwide (2004:122), suggesting that it flows from "continuity thinking" (Robbins 2007) among anthropologists and associated problems with the culture concept. It also reflects the fact that Pentecostalism is a much-maligned North American popular religion, about which North American anthropologists in particular may have deep-seated stereotypes, to the extent of creating a disciplinary blind spot (Cannell 2005). For example, Susan Harding (1991) posits that ethnographers may avoid evangelicals and fundamentalists because they consider these people to be "repugnant cultural others" (393). As such, where anthropologists do mention movements like Pentecostalism, they frequently see them as set apart by difference from other aspects of local life (a point I will return to in my discussion of Dombrowski). Analytically, this tendency has been exacerbated where anthropological studies of Indigenous people are concerned, since the Americanist paradigm has been characterized by repeated attempts to look past "religion" for the true object of study, be it myth, ritual, history, culture, discourse, politics, or economics (Hultkranz 1983:1, 61). While most denominations in most regions of the north are understudied by contemporary scholars, the situation seems most acute or out of balance with respect to Pentecostalism. What has been missed here is the opportunity to analyze new forms of cultural pluralism.

Dombrowski's book, *Against Culture: Development, Politics, and Religion in Indian Alaska* (2001), is largely a success in that it escapes from many of the analytical traps I have just described, and is generally a sophisticated theoretical discussion of culture, religion, and

economics, its insights for the most part ethnographically well-grounded. The book has been useful to me and other scholars in that it constitutes the first extensive consideration of Indigenous Pentecostalism in a monograph; thus, I will return to the book at some length in due course. Suffice it to mention here that Dombrowski's engagement of religion with politics is welcome, as is his lively ethnographic writing. I also agree with Dombrowski that traditional culture is strongly implicated in some stances taken by Pentecostal leaders and practitioners (e.g., 2001:2). Yet, I wish to make a distinctive contribution by questioning Dombrowski's insistence that Indigenous Pentecostalism is necessarily "against" Indigenous culture (e.g., 2001:5). This idea does not reflect the totality of my data very well. I also do not think Dombrowski's arguments for a differential class or economic basis of Pentecostal conversion and cultural politics (2001:146-147; see also 2001 xiii-xiv; 5;14-15; 92; 111; 161; 183; 195-196) can be accepted across the north—and perhaps not in Alaska either.

Dombrowski's focus reflects his interest in "the Flo Ellers incident" (2001:1-3), a 1992 event, prior to his fieldwork, wherein a group of Native Alaskan Christians burned a number of items, including liquor bottles, heavy metal music albums, and political paraphernalia of their land claims organization (modern manufactured items bearing a traditional crest). Rumours persisted that dancing regalia was also burned. While questions remain whether any of the items burned had any particular ceremonial, historical or museological significance, the incident was interpreted by many people as a symbolic attack on Native religious traditions, perhaps in particular those associated with village elites and land claims bodies. As Ellers stated later, "You won't find any Chilkat dancers dancing in heaven" (Dombrowski 2001:2). This is certainly a significant event in the life of a community, all the more so because it echoed another voluntary burning of traditional items in the early 20th century by Christians. The burning becomes the defining image of Dombrowski's book, and its central question.

Rooted as the Flo Ellers incident is in the history and specificity of its Alaska context, it has a Canadian comparator: the forced dismantling, by community authorities in Oujé-Bougamou, Quebec, of a sweat-lodge built by Mr. Redfern Mianscum (Peritz 2011). Unlike the Flo Ellers incident, this was clearly a politically sanctioned move to restrict access to (neo-)traditionalist religious ceremonies on First Nation lands, motivated by fears of "witchcraft," and concerns about "confusing" people over spiritual matters. One interesting point of contrast is that, in the Quebec case, Pentecostals and their allies

were more politically powerful and constituted a majority of the community's population. Clearly, these examples show, incidents occur where opponents of "culture" invoke Christian principles to defy political and sectarian rivals. Yet, are such incidents, which may capture the media spotlight as flashpoints, the most reflective and engaging basis for ethnographic analysis?

While initially I found the "Against Culture" argument advanced by Dombrowski to be quite persuasive, my research has persuaded me that this argument faces many difficulties. To take the context of my fieldwork, can a Cree-led congregation, meeting in Cree, where elders council and heal their kinfolk, in which membership supports maintenance of ties between kinfolk and hunting partners, be "against" Cree culture? It is not enough to observe that Pentecostalism has been introduced from outside (Legros 1986-7:67) or is irrevocably "against" traditional culture (Dombrowski 2001); a fuller reckoning of cultural transformation and religious practice is required.

Usefully, Robert R. Crépeau and Marie-Pierre Bousquet (2012) insist that the response of Indigenous people of the Americas to Christianity and contemporary religious pluralism has been increasingly complex. They decry the binary opposition between cultural continuity and discontinuity, in relation to religious conversion, stating that the alternative lies "in a third way, that of a transformative continuity that actualizes the local and contextual forces" (2012:17). Such an approach seems consistent with the fine-grained aspects of ethnography, and will be helpful in navigating the debate, given the complexity of the dynamics of religious conversion and pluralism on the individual and social scales: at times seeming to accept, at times seeming to reject, the traditional cultural context or given cosmological principles.

"Our culture is really not too good because there's power in it."

In this section, I demonstrate the degree to which Cree Pentecostalism draws on the affect and assumptions of animism to develop its own logic and its own stance on Indigenous culture, even while condemning some aspects of animism or shamanism. Cree Pentecostals both use Pentecostalism as an interpretive frame for understanding of, and as a practical alternative to, less preferred aspects of their own culture, while paradoxically also interpreting and practicing Pentecostalism in light of the assumptions of Cree culture—namely those embedded in animism and shamanism. The data I discuss show how given utterances and practices of Indigenous Pentecostals, which at first may seem to be strongly against Indigenous culture, can

actually be seen as embedded within, and even sympathetic toward, some of the assumptions of traditional culture, including aspects of animism and shamanism often considered as anathema to Pentecostals.

While this article is not a detailed ethnographic case study of Trout Lake and Peerless Lake (see Westman 2008; 2009; 2010a; 2010b; 2012a; 2012b), but rather a controlled comparison or regional review essay more in the spirit of ethnology, it is still appropriate to provide some background on the context and orientation of my data. Trout Lake and Peerless Lake are two Cree-speaking communities represented by the Peerless Trout First Nation. They are located 25 kilometers apart, in the boreal forest approximately 500 km north of Edmonton. Historically, the communities have been composed of both Cree and Métis families; however, today most residents are Status Indians. Until 2010, Peerless and Trout were landless communities where most inhabitants were members of the Bigstone Cree Nation (BCN). Following the settlement of the BCN's Treaty Land Entitlement Claim, in which community representatives participated, Trout and Peerless achieved independent status as the Peerless Trout First Nation, and are now in the process of implementing the claim's provisions for a reserve land base and improved community infrastructure.

Cree-speaking people in the central region of northern Alberta had participated in the fur trade throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, and encountered Roman Catholic missionaries or their teachings beginning in the late 19th century, with Oblate missionaries visiting both Trout Lake and Peerless Lake during the 1890s. The 20th century was a period of religious pluralism, featuring persistent practitioners of shamanism and animism, as well as the arrival of multiple Protestant denominations, beginning with Anglicanism in 1909, and including Pentecostal missionaries (many of whom have been Aboriginal people) since the 1960s. Trout Lake remained a largely Catholic/animist community until the late 1960s, featuring practices of indigenized Cree Catholicism and priests sympathetic to Cree views (Waugh 1996). However, today the only active churches in the communities are Pentecostal congregations run by local people speaking mainly in Cree. Pentecostals are important at the political level, being represented on First Nation councils. In spite of some recent successes at the land claims table, regional communities remain insecure in terms of income, employment, and practical rights to subsistence, while living in an area faced with rampant energy, aggregate mineral and forestry development (Westman 2010).

Based on research in Trout and Peerless, Earle H. Waugh states that there is a basic compatibility between

seeking spiritual blessings through Pentecostalism and seeking spirit helpers in the traditional Cree fashion (1996:301), a view I have further developed in my own work in the region (Westman 2012a, 2012b). Similarly, as I shall show later in the article, much of the most promising recent research on Pentecostalism among North American Indigenous Peoples supports an argument that Christianity is deeply embedded in prior systems of spiritual practice. Remarks from Cree Pentecostal lay people in Trout Lake and Peerless Lake also suggest a strong interest, or even deep compatibility, between Cree culture and Pentecostalism, though perhaps this may not always be evident on a surface level. We will come to a contextualized understanding of the complexity at play, where describing a given utterance or informant as being against culture would be inconsistent with other co-texts and contexts.

In a 2005 interview with me, the late Elder John A. Cardinal, of Peerless Lake, made remarks on the dangers of tradition, which illustrate the issues at play. John A. (a Cree-speaking hunter and political operator with a strong interest in both protecting land rights and creating employment) would not normally be described as being against Cree culture. He was discussing the mass conversions to Evangelical, and subsequently to Pentecostal, Christianity, which changed local religious life in the 1950s and 1960s:

So, that's the reason why we changed our lives, and now we don't have any problem, to tangle up with that old religion with our family, with our kids eh? I don't know about white society, but I know our culture is really not too good because there's *power* in it. There's really *power* and, it's working: just killing each other by dreams, and you just name it eh?

Note that John A.'s salient concern here is to avoid being plagued by evil spirits and curses.

Fear of bad medicine was a major factor motivating the followers of subarctic leaders, who were generally also seen as charismatic spiritual protectors and healers. Today, many Cree Christians seek such protection through Cree pastors and prayer groups. Being afraid of powerful evil people and beings is not the same as being against Cree culture; rather on one level it indicates a deep acceptance of Cree animist cultural assumptions—namely that spirits exist who must be placated or shunned—on the part of both Pentecostals and traditionalists. For many people, the *power* John A. describes was the principal reason for leaving their “old religion” (animism or shamanism). The old religion worked but brought with it negative features such as cursing. Moreover, under most

Christian (not just Pentecostal) assumptions accessible to regional Aboriginal people, generally throughout the 20th century, to practice traditional religion was to court damnation. Nevertheless, many people have continued to seek traditional animist experiences and knowledge.

Similarly, Janet Netowastenum, a mother in her thirties, also of Peerless Lake, stated in 2006:

I know our traditions work because I've tried them. But I know going to church works too. But people say with going to church you go to heaven; with witchcraft you go to hell. It says in the Bible have no god but me.

Thus, as John A.'s and Janet's remarks suggest, the attraction to Pentecostalism can be understood in similar terms to that of tradition, "it works," but without the threat of damnation that attends animistic practices in a Christianized worldview. At Trout and Peerless, then, I would suggest that cultural conflicts and psychological tensions between Pentecostalism and traditionalism are thus primarily ontological, not primarily political or identity-oriented, in character.

John A.'s line of thought on the subject of power was more fully developed in a 2006 interview with me when he discussed his interest, as a youth, in traditional spirituality:

I saw my grandfather using the medicine bag and the medicine back when he'd come out and fight with somebody, and just beat them up. [CW: physically?] Oh yeah, he's in power. Nobody could stand against this old guy, just because of his medicine. And I know it's the same thing when he meets a woman and the woman doesn't want him. That lady will just come crying to him, you know. I've seen it.

John A. speaks in the present tense, a Cree narrative strategy to honour his late relative and make his story seem fresh and alive.

Such utterances in interviews with me closely resemble remarks that John A. made in other contexts. Elsewhere (Kituskeenow 1999:62-63), he praises his relatives' healing powers and does not speak against traditional medicine. As he acknowledges, there are two sides of Cree medicine: for good and ill (cf. Ahenakew, Ahenakew and Wolfart 2000). Furthermore, regarding Cree culture, remarks John A. made to a journalist (Woodward 1990:10) serve to shade in some meanings in my interview excerpts, while foreshadowing familiar themes from the above, more recent remarks:

The Indian way is our culture, yes, but some of the Indian medicine use is bad. Indian medicine can be

used for adultery or personal gain, so we don't use that. We would rather stick with our Bible.

Note that this utterance does not presuppose a total rejection of Indigenous culture, or even of "Indian medicine" in its entirety, but rather an acceptance of traditional culture as powerful and an ensuing turning away from "some" elements of it, necessitating the creation of a boundary between acceptable and unacceptable elements of culture.

For John A., "the Indian way" is linked to the use of medicine power, but seems to represent only one element of "our culture." Indeed, both "our culture" and "the Indian way" may be adapted to mean many things, depending on the context, and depending on the knowledge of the hearer. Cree people use the phrase, "our culture," to denote subsistence-oriented practices such as hide-tanning, as well as more spiritual pursuits such as ceremonies, medicine picking and storytelling.

John A.'s characterization of elements within Cree culture as powerful but evil-recalls an "official" Pentecostal view of Cree tradition (as of the past, and, moreover, as evil), seemingly represented in John A.'s remarks, which is supported by some pastors and by church literature circulating between households. It is just such pronouncements and meanings that have been picked up by many analysts, who may miss the point that anti-cultural views are contested both from within Pentecostal congregations and from without.

Moreover, elements of Christian spiritual warfare (DeBernardi 1999), such as praying against local spirits or curses, sometimes on the sites of ancient ceremonies (practices evident in Trout and Peerless), have the potential to recognize the power of Indigenous spiritual traditions by "translating the Devil" (Meyer 1999: quoting title), thus bringing Indigenous spiritual affect—including fear—into the heart of Christianity (Cox 1995:281-298; Laugrand and Oosten 2010:342-371). Far from a rejection of Indigenous culture, then, the Evangelical or Pentecostal stance may entail a full-scale acceptance of some key elements in Indigenous ontology and cosmology.

Fear of malevolent spiritual powers and the consequent need for an intercessor or personal gift suggest a structural similarity and experiential overlap between Cree shamanist and Cree Pentecostal dynamics in several spheres including the following: formation of religious groupings; individual fear or experience of spirits and curses; development or reception of personal charisma. These congruencies with shamanism, still very much alive in the region and in the communities' memory,² may create potential for neo-shamanic or animistic practices within Cree Pentecostalism to flourish in some contexts,

although this might not be the case, or acknowledged as such, at all times by all adherents.

Beyond spiritual warfare, another form of religious pluralism that appears to maintain traditional cultural moorings has been the pronounced tendency of Pentecostals, like earlier missionaries, to adopt traditional terms for God when speaking Indigenous languages such as Cree, thereby maintaining lexical sets for both names of the divine and emotional states of worship that are consistent in many respects with traditional religious speech (Westman 2012a).³ The use of Cree language, specific traditional lexemes, and traditional speech genres, does much to bring Cree cultural traditions into the heart of the service. The strategic breaking of other Cree speech norms (such as shouting and crying during services, and women taking leadership roles in mixed groups) does not detract from the fundamental structural similarities in discourse that I have documented (Westman 2008:220-24) between traditional and Pentecostal Cree rituals. The problem of Cree terminology for the names of God suggests that Cree Pentecostal church discourse is, analytically, a slippery object, difficult to position in strict opposition to Cree cultural practice generally or even Cree Spirituality specifically. This is also true of several other cultural practices, which may be contested or embraced depending on context.

Ethnographic research in Trout and Peerless has demonstrated that Pentecostal preachers, politicians and lay people (particularly the “hot and cold” majority of looser church affiliates) are called upon to make choices such as the following about their culture:

- For leisure, Métis dancing (which strongly resembles French Canadian and British folk dance traditions) is acceptable, while Indian dancing is contested;
- For home décor, paintings of Indians and wildlife are acceptable, while shamanic art and spiritual objects such as dream catchers and crucifixes are contested;
- For rituals, the use of Cree language, songs and speech genres in Pentecostal services is acceptable, while singing and drumming in the shamanic style is contested;
- For scary stories, telling stories of the *wihtiko* monster is acceptable, as is attending a performance of *Hamlet*, but reading Harry Potter books is contested;
- For gathering, collecting plants for foods and teas is acceptable, while collecting medicines (potentially requiring spiritual offerings to potent beings) is contested;
- For hunting, prayerfully taking animals (preferably not on Sunday) is endorsed, while attempting to use animist rituals to contact animal spirits is forbidden.

Note that I and other analysts have seen Pentecostal people break or bend most of these guidelines from time to time. This may be especially the case with respect to the use of traditional healing practices, which Indigenous Pentecostals often use more or less covertly (cf. Csordas 2000; Fletcher and Kirmayer 1997). Such examples show the complexity of assessing a monolithic Pentecostal stance on Cree culture.

With regard to the final and crucial points, on subsistence, both practicing Pentecostals and less observant community members make the observation that the bush is the best place to talk to God. This focus on the religious element of bush life among contemporary Cree Christians resembles classical assessments about the status of hunting among Northern Algonquians as a “holy occupation” (Speck 1935), conducive to widespread animist beliefs and shamanic practices. While Angela Tarango (2009b:110) — working in the contiguous states—suggests that the hunt is one area of classical Native American culture and religion to which Pentecostalism offered no equivalencies, my ethnographic data suggest otherwise. The general assertion that Cree Pentecostals continue to practice subsistence/economic aspects of their culture and continue to believe in animal spirits has been affirmed already by Adrian Tanner (1979:211; 2007:141). What is forbidden here is but one element of the culture (albeit formerly a central one): attempting to contact these “boss” spirits of plants and animals. Rather, God becomes the source of hunting safety and bounty (Westman 2012a; Preston 2010:208).

In many cases, traditional Cree attitudes about the powerful and spiritual character of given activities (drumming) or entities (plants) are salient in the Pentecostal condemnation of them. Interacting with drums and medicinal plants potentially entails spiritual intentionality toward a powerful entity. The tendency of some Pentecostals to subsume such practices under the category of “witchcraft” does not detract from perceptions of their efficacy either in other quarters or among many Cree Pentecostals themselves; however, the basis for the accusation of witchcraft to those who collect and dispense medicinal plants may be as much Cree as Christian. The key point is that, while plant use is a topic of much discussion, medicinal plants have their advocates among Cree Pentecostals as well as their critics. These complex responses go well beyond the “monolithic and exclusive” (Beaucage and Meintel 2007:12) doctrines posited by religious leaders, and anthropologists should attend to them.

As I have shown here and elsewhere (Westman 2012a), many elements of Cree Pentecostal ritual practice and discourse closely resemble their traditional forebears.

The ideal status of the elder as a gifted and authoritative leader with a spiritual orientation is one evident analogy between traditions. The prevalence of hunting- and land-related discourse in Cree Pentecostal church services is another. This is true as well of Pentecostal tent meetings, bible camps and baptisms held in summer at traditional seasonal gathering sites, which are also sacred and ceremonial sites. Tent meetings are more popular and are considered more powerful than regular services, due in part to this connection to place and the outdoors (Mills 1986; Schreyer 2009:25, cf. Tarango 2009b:125-131). Social connections can also be made beyond the grave at such events: I attended one tent meeting within 100 meters of a known and tended bush graveyard where ancestors of many meeting participants lay resting.

Altogether, while some utterances and actions of local leaders could be interpreted as against culture, others appear more open to rapprochement. As Pastor (and band councilor) Emile Houle stated, "I don't put down anybody's religion. You can still pray to the Great Spirit, but in the name of Jesus Christ." Such statements should alert us to the possibility of unsuspected transformations and flows within the religious landscape.

Like John A.'s and Emile's statements, selected remarks of Indigenous Pentecostal and Evangelical leaders outside of my study region also suggest that the cultural politics of Pentecostalism are not reducible to a simple for or against dichotomy. As Mohawk evangelist, Andrew C. Maracle stated, "I maintain my language; I maintain my culture today, and I'm proud of the fact that I have" (Saggio 2009:100). Another Mohawk evangelist, Rodger Cree, opined: "When you are Native, you don't have to do cartwheels, or play the drums, or put on regalia. You know who you are, your identity. You cannot dress it up" (Tarango 2009b:155). Similarly, Saulteaux pastor, Dean Shingoose stated: "There's a fine line between culture and religion, and there were qualities of our native culture that were worthy. These could have been turned to the glorification of God, but instead it was all crushed" (Woodard 1993:32). Such a discussion can also be seen in the writings of Adrian Jacobs (1996), an Iroquois leader in the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. Jacobs suggests some elements of Indigenous cultures be rejected by Christians, while others be considered as positive and even as "sanctified." The possibility of "sanctifying" elements of Indigenous culture within Christianity is as fascinating as that of "indigenizing" (Sahlins 1999) Christianity within Indigenous culture.

Similarly, but writing from the perspective of a leftist, feminist, Native American, Evangelical Christian, academic Andrea Smith strongly resists the arguments

that Christians are not fully Indigenous, that they are dupes or have false consciousness. Rather, her focus is on agency, contingency and ability to strategically form political coalitions and individual values. While Indigenous Charismatic Christians may seem to perform Whiteness, she writes, they resist it as well (2008:94). Although Smith states that she has been unable to resolve contradictions between her ethnic, gendered and political identities with the received politics of Evangelical Christianity in the USA, she also presents several examples where the politics are more flexible than expected, and of moments where, among specific individuals, the contradictions appear to fall away, bringing believers together with a god who has no gender, race, class, or culture.

Against Culture?

Kirk Dombrowski made a significant contribution to northern Pentecostal studies in his 2001 book on Haida and Tlingit communities in Southeast Alaska: *Against Culture: Development, Politics, and Religion in Indian Alaska*. He brings to the fore many of the tensions and correlations between development, politics, religion and culture in an Indigenous community and his analysis in many respects attests well to the complexity at hand. He develops his central vision beyond the Flo Ellers incident, discussed previously, by using both ethnographic study of churches and interviews with church members and recruits. Nevertheless, to some extent he subordinates his ethnographic investigation of Pentecostal conversion to questions of environmental, economic and political change. My remarks here focus mainly on part 2 of Dombrowski's book, and on its Introduction, which deal with Pentecostals and other new Christian groups in Southeast Alaska. Dombrowski mainly interprets these data through the lens of the economic/environmental history presented in part 1 of his book. Accordingly, causal linkages suggested in the economics section are adopted in the religion section, as Pentecostal and other fringe church practices are interpreted largely as part of a materialist dialectic.

Dombrowski sees culture as negotiated in the Native Alaskan context between a privileged group, benefitting from a land claim settlement, and a poorer group, whose rights are less secure. Symbols of traditional culture, according to Dombrowski, have been marshalled by the former, who control both political structures and the original denominational missionary churches. Meanwhile, poorer people are supposedly drawn to Pentecostal and other new congregations. Many of the latter group live very traditionally and rely on subsistence. Yet, according to Dombrowski, under the early, uniquely capitalistic and

inequitable Alaskan land claim settlement, they may not be eligible to participate in the traditional economy as *Indians* (members of land claim bodies), based on their loss of ethnostatus or land rights. The extent to which the unique history of this highly flawed land claim settlement drives Dombrowski's theoretical argument is probably not adequately acknowledged by the author.

Furthermore, culture is not strictly based on political status or land tenure. I also work in a region where access to Indian status, treaty entitlements and land claims benefits has been deeply contested and divisive, but I know that Indian status (which is, after all, given by the government) is not all there is to Indigenous culture and identity. Moreover, there is no body of literature suggesting that those lacking Indian status or membership in a given land claims organization are more likely to convert to Pentecostalism; neither does Dombrowski provide statistical information that would show this to be the case in the Alaska context. So, minimally, Dombrowski's approach of considering those who are not shareholders in the Alaska Native corporations as being against culture does not appear to fit well as an explanatory tool in the broader regional context.

For me, although Dombrowski writes well and is generally quite respectful toward his informants, he focuses on documenting the apartness of Pentecostals, rather than on the ways in which they continue to participate in and reconstitute their Indigenous cultures, so that his theoretical approach does not do as much as it could to develop understanding of Pentecostalism's social contexts in the Circumpolar region. Granted he is addressing the Alaska context, but his theoretical arguments would appear to have broader claims in the region, and should be duly considered as such. Moreover, in spite of his repeated statements to the contrary, in my reading the explicit and repeated linkage of conversion and class is central to Dombrowski's Marxian argument in *Against Culture*. To some degree, he consigns religious conversion to the status of a dependant variable in a base-superstructure dynamic. Dombrowski arrived in Alaska with the intention of studying politics and resource management, not religion, and did not begin conducting fieldwork in Pentecostal churches until quite late in his fieldwork, with the result that his discussion of literature on church matters, as well as some of his church data presentation, feels rather thin at points. This is especially the case in comparison with the well-cited and rich part 1 of his book.

Book reviews by regional specialists (Kan 2003; Nadasdy 2002; Thornton 2005) suggest that Dombrowski's theoretical construct and data reportage are contested among those who also know the southeastern Alaskan

ethnographic context particularly well. Probing and challenging reviews and discussions of the book have continued to appear; more recently, from scholars focusing more specifically on Pentecostalism in Indigenous communities (Burkinshaw 2009:155; Marshall 2011:42-43, 61-62; Tarango 2009a, 2009b:16-17). Burkinshaw, working on data from the northern and central BC coast, explicitly questions the application of Dombrowski's thesis in that regional context, which resembles that of southeast Alaska more than other parts of the Canadian north. Of course, it is also worth noting that other scholars, many from further afield, were more complimentary in their reviews of the book.

Although he relies extensively on qualitative ethnographic data in linking Pentecostalism to the political and economic conflicts he perceives in the field site, Dombrowski misses the opportunity, in my reading, to focus on Pentecostalism's experiential aspects. In my view, he does not present either convincing qualitative data or adequate quantitative data to support his claims about linkages between religion and class formation or political status. Clearly, relative economic and political marginalization is one factor in Pentecostalism's appeal. Yet, I suggest that Dombrowski focuses too much on relative inequality *within* given communities, and not enough on the generalized exclusion of Indigenous people from North American society (including mainstream churches) as factors in their conversion to Pentecostalism. This is without mentioning any covert connection of Pentecostalism to Indigenous religious traditions, a possibility Dombrowski does not consider.

Working in a sophisticated tradition of cultural materialism inspired by Raymond Williams (e.g., 1977) and Gerald Sider (e.g., 1993), Dombrowski is hardly making a crude determinist argument. At one point he concedes that people convert mainly to save their souls (2001:9), and not for economic reasons. Nevertheless, to my eye, Dombrowski views conversion primarily through a lens of cultural Marxism and critical race theory, frequently comparing Indigenous people to African Americans in what to me seems a poorly supported line of argument. For example, he repeatedly asserts that because Native Americans (not just Native Alaskans but Indigenous people more broadly) have allegedly been able to participate in the national economy only "as natives" (that is, on the basis of collective rights claims); therefore, "as individuals" their relationship to their culture and to state authority is inherently different from that of other ethnic minorities. Thus, according to Dombrowski, there can be only one version of a given tribal culture. As he puts it, "there are no native subcultures" (2001:12),

only legitimate and official tribal cultures, which one can belong to, or be *against*. Suffice it to say that this conception of identity is almost totally grounded in materialist or political economy considerations.

Dombrowski's dubious claim here, that because of their relationship to natural resources, Indigenous people do not have subcultures or indigenize the symbols of their difference in the way that other minority groups such as African Americans do, is directly relevant to the question of whether Christian churches can be indigenized within a given Indigenous culture (i.e., as subcultures), allowing for what Dombrowski recognizes has been a creative and politicizing church movement within African American culture. Nevertheless, he explicitly asserts that, while Protestant churches can become a mainstay of African American subculture, this could never occur with an Indigenous church, even one with an entirely Indigenous congregation and pastorate (2001:13), like the sort of church that I have been documenting ethnographically in the previous section and in Westman 2012a. This conclusion does not fit my data, where people speak and sing in Cree during church services, and use the Bear and the Eagle in narratives to make points about Christian theology. Indeed, I suggest that the indigenization processes evident in Cree Pentecostal church practices reflect merely one of the creative and self-affirming subcultures open to Indigenous people.

Dombrowski remarks usefully that conversion is a transformative process of transition and learning (2001:133), suggesting that one could be in multiple groups at the same time, at least during key liminal phases. He also recognizes that his typology of established churches (pro-culture, allegedly with more elite membership) and new ones (against culture, allegedly with marginalized members) is a provisional one, when he comments that sometimes established churches adopt charismatic practices, and that practices and beliefs may also differ between given Pentecostal, Evangelical, or Fundamentalist congregations and networks.⁴ Furthermore, in a 2007 article in *Anthropologica*, Dombrowski appears to step away from his linkages between conversion and economic status, but does not directly address the question of how Pentecostal stances on culture would be analytically implicated in this move. So there is scope, consistent with his 2007 reframing, for reinterpretation of many of his claims in *Against Culture*.

In northern Alberta and elsewhere in Canada, Pentecostals have proved able and, occasionally, radical leaders, whose presence has been felt at the highest levels of national politics (Westman 2010b). This point is directly in opposition to Dombrowski's view about the relationship

between land claims, politics and Pentecostal adherence in Alaska communities, as well his claim that Pentecostals are generally apolitical or anti-political. At Trout and Peerless, as well as Cadotte Lake (Woodland Cree First Nation), and within the BCN, Pentecostals have been involved in community leadership as well as in negotiating and litigating land rights (Westman 2010b). In Trout and Peerless, the "cultural" people feel constrained and practice mainly in private. Pentecostals, meanwhile, open political and community meetings with their prayers for salvation, demonstrating to all that they are the public face of local cultural and religious norms. This is different from Dombrowski's analysis, wherein Alaskan Pentecostals largely practice behind closed doors, while traditional cultural performances carry the day at larger political meetings and regional gatherings.

Furthermore, there are no conclusive or sustained economic differences that would explain different levels of Pentecostal adherence at Trout and Peerless, as Dombrowski's model would suggest. Indeed, it is worth noting that there have been no large-scale data collected in North America to suggest poorer Indigenous peoples are more likely to convert to Pentecostalism than wealthier ones, or tying such conversions to other cultural dynamics. Nor have sufficient data been collected internationally to pronounce finally on such theoretically loaded questions as the role of class and culture in religious conversion (Robbins 2004:131).

While Dombrowski contributes a number of useful observations and a significant amount of new data about inter-church politics and personal narratives of conversion, as well as useful ritual data, he does not build on contemporary debates within Anthropology of Religion, and many of his sources on "Fundamentalist" Christianity are dated and prejudicial. In an otherwise favourable discussion of his book, Pauline Turner-Strong (2005:257) implies that it lacks sufficient time-depth for a full understanding of Indigenous Christianity, and might have benefitted from greater attentiveness to perspectives and approaches from Symbolic Anthropology. Similarly, as Angela Tarango recently commented, Dombrowski shows little sustained interest in either Pentecostal theology or subjective experiences of Holy Spirit gifts and possession (2009a:1511; 2009b:17).

Neither does Dombrowski attempt to assess the degree to which Pentecostalism is compatible with Indigenous spiritual beliefs and practices. These beliefs and practices themselves get short shrift in *Against Culture*, as Haida and Tlingit culture seem to consist mainly in hunting (for poor people) and (on the symbolic/political level, generally for elites) in the cultural politics of

dancing and regalia. Traditional myths, rituals, and even social organization thus get virtually no attention in his book. I would prefer an analysis that considers connections and disconnections between animism and Pentecostalism, rather than remaining on a largely political economic interpretive grounding.

Within Culture?

Naomi Adelson (2001), in a discussion of Quebec Cree cultural gatherings, while not touching directly on Pentecostalism, provides several points that I use as a counterpoint to Dombrowski's 2001 findings. Significantly, Adelson suggests that there is no reason to believe Aboriginal people are turning against their cultures. For her, the concept of Aboriginality is being continually redefined and reaffirmed. It is a critical, shifting, negotiating tool, not a symbol or garment but a lived identity. Aboriginality is located partly in difference from the dominant society, but is not fixed into a dialectic relationship. Adelson, like Dombrowski, acknowledges that Aboriginal cultural distinctness is partially based on claims to resources. On the other hand, in her analysis, gatherings representing all community members are possible, and people care about Aboriginal culture, which can be redeployed strategically. She remarks on the relatively seamless integration of church services (in a region where Pentecostal churches are highly important), traditional spirituality, and other cultural events at the Cree gatherings. While references to internal divisions, specifically over spiritual practices, appear in Adelson's analysis as well, these are analyzed in light of overall data that suggests Aboriginal culture need not be divisive, even in a region with a substantial Pentecostal population.

I want to return now to trying to understand Andrea Smith's experience of a (Christian) god transcending culture, race, and class, and consider what anthropology has made analytically of such experiential claims. Mainly in the last 20 years, Americanist anthropologists have begun to accept the potential for mainstream denominational Christianity to become tightly embroidered within Indigenous cultures (Goulet 1998; Philips Valentine 1995). Much of this reassessment within North American anthropology has been due not to a renewed global interest in the Anthropology of Christianity as such, but rather to theoretical advances in ethnohistory of missions (Axtell 1982) and to the voices of Indigenous Christians (cf. Minde et al. 1997; Sax and Linklater 1990; Treat 1996). Thus it would be unfortunate at this point to continue maintaining a firm analytical distinction between Pentecostal or Fundamentalist Christianity (never to be indigenized) and mainstream denominations

(more amenable to synthesizing with Indigenous cultures). Recent ethnography in northern Canada and Alaska provides a strong empirical framework to reconsider the place of Pentecostalism in the regional religious landscape, and to position it in relation to animism and traditional culture. It is to a synthesis of this bilingual body of work—a considerable contribution in itself—that I turn now.

As Richard J. Preston, an astute and early observer of Cree Pentecostalism (1975), more recently commented (2010:208, 216), Cree Pentecostal practices are increasingly characterized by moderation, flexibility, inclusiveness, and respect for individual autonomy, all values in keeping with traditional bush values consciously idealized within Cree culture and society. Similarly, Antonia Mills' seminal 1986 work on a Beaver Indian revival meeting suggests that elements of Pentecostal practice provide direct and conscious continuity with "intersecting" Beaver animist practices. Indeed, the Beavers of northern British Columbia, whom Mills observed, seemed to be incorporating Indigenous symbols and practices into their Pentecostal worship more explicitly than the Cree in Alberta, with whom I attended church. This resembles contemporary practices at some other Indigenous Pentecostal congregations where participants wear regalia and make use of Indigenous symbols (e.g., Waugh 1996:235).

Like Mills, Louis-Jacques Dorais (1997) noted that the social importance of Pentecostalism extends well beyond the small core of regular churchgoers. Also, he remarked (as Mills (1986) and Preston (1975) had for Cree and Dene traditions) that Inuit Pentecostalism in Quaqtaq, Quebec, bears an imprint of Inuit shamanism (1997:78-79). In addition, Pentecostalism has had its own impact on the Inuit practice of Anglicanism. Formerly their main religion, Anglicanism, among the Inuit now is both competing with and influenced by Pentecostalism (1997:45; 76). Dorais documents the political involvement of Pentecostals in broader community issues and in kinship networks, while underlining the essential unity of community interests. These points are important to consider in relation to Dombrowski's arguments.

A. Nicole Stuckenberg's accounts of religious life in a small Nunavut community provides abundant ethnographic data on a range of rituals, including Christmas celebrations (2005) and Holy Spirit Baptism (2008:77-78), demonstrating insights both into Pentecostal and Anglican practice among contemporary Inuit. She posits a cultural fit between Pentecostalism and Inuit traditions, thus viewing Pentecostalism's spiritual power as being in direct connection with shamanic traditions. Stuckenberg also provides a substantial discussion of

denominational history, effectively providing data about early Pentecostal converts, connecting local revivals to specific outside mission groups, and documenting transitions to local control. Inuit Pentecostals in Qikiqtarjuaq are enacting their culture in a manner consistent with their understandings of Christianity, she states, not opposing the two (2005:86; 92). Moreover, Pentecostals and Anglicans sometimes meet together for services, and even share key beliefs and practices regarding charismatic gifts. At the same time, both Pentecostalism and Anglicanism contain streams and discourses rejecting shamanism and the past; yet one cannot cut oneself off altogether from the past since it is the largely past's values, Stuckenberg states (2008:79), which constitute society in its present form. Interestingly, Stuckenberg also recounts a Flo Ellers-type event where young Inuit burned liquor bottles and heavy metal albums following a suicide in the region (2005:84), but gives the incident relatively little notice in comparison with Dombrowski. Moreover, she focuses on the event as a means of dealing with evil spirits, rather than an anti-cultural watershed moment.

Frédéric Laugrand and Jarich Oosten's recent studies (e.g., 2010) of Inuit Pentecostals and Evangelicals document how these Christians are members of a movement that is simultaneously globalized and emplaced, both in a very concrete sense, while maintaining links to Inuit traditions (including shamanism), and to the reconfiguration and transformation of these traditions in modern contexts. Healing the land, as well as reconnecting with ancestors and contemporaries, are major Pentecostal ritual foci consistent with elements of traditional Inuit culture. Like Stuckenberg (2008), Laugrand and Oosten (2008:60) argue that, among the Inuit, Christianity in general and Pentecostalism in particular not only resemble shamanic beliefs and practices (in spite of overt opposition to shamanism) but are also conducive to maintaining Inuit cultural values and social structures in other ways as well.

Similarly, Marie-Pierre Bousquet (2007) suggests that Pentecostalism in Quebec's Algonquin communities resembles in some respects Neo-Traditionalism or Pan-Indianism, in that it is partially a revitalization of shamanic power and partially a religious innovation. Her emphasis is on the individual's religious experience, expressed by some Algonquin as their "need to be loved" by a God who is equally manifested in different religious traditions (Bousquet 2012). Bousquet presents the different religious choices open to individuals as non-closed categories. That is, the distinct traditions influence one another (with some elders seeing the Pentecostal message as closely linked to Roman Catholic values); also,

individuals may blend them, or move freely between groups. Moving past the supposed inflexibility of Pentecostal belief, Bousquet calls attention to the suppleness of day-to-day practices, which allow people to adapt their beliefs to social and community life. Like Laugrand and Oosten's (2010; 2008) research, Bousquet's work also highlights the globalization of Indigenous Pentecostalism.

Ethnomusicologist Lynn Whidden has compared Cree musical traditions in northern Manitoba and northern Quebec since the 1970s. Her findings (2007) suggest that Evangelical Christians' gospel music—now an essential element of ritual practice and identity construction in many northern Cree communities—draws on ideological and practical continuities both with earlier denominational hymns and spiritually powerful hunting songs. Culturally, gospel has become "something people do as opposed to something people consume" (88). Moreover, "gospel music ... fulfills the northern Cree predilection for a spiritual context for their music" (126). In the context of wakes for the dead, gospel music has become rooted in Cree life beyond the core community of believers. (I have also observed Cree wakes and funerals to be times of marked religious pluralism, blending and tolerance.) Overall, Whidden suggests (87) that gospel music has become not only the foundation of Cree Christian life, but also a critical source of affect within the broader Cree society, one that remains distinctly Evangelical or Pentecostal in tone.

Each of the studies I have cited in this section suggest a linkage between the practice of Pentecostalism by Indigenous peoples and prior traditions of shamanism or animism among these peoples, an intersection I also have described (Westman 2008; 2012a; 2012b), as well as a suggestion that Pentecostal conversion does not necessarily entail social disharmony or cultural rivalry. This stands apart from the hypothesis of Pentecostalism being against culture, and brings us back to Cr  peau and Bousquet's (2012:17) insistence on a transformed continuity, as well as Laugrand and Oosten's (2010:372-373) emphasis on the importance of transformations in understanding Indigenous religious experience. Indeed, in an international context, Aparecida Vil  a and Robin M. Wright (2009) have recently argued that, "shamanism continues to be the key domain for understanding the experience of Christianity" (13) among Amerindians (cf. Cox 1995:222). In light of such findings, we ought to take seriously the proposition that Indigenous Pentecostal practice owes much of its affective power to a transformation or structural reactualization of shamanist or animist practices. While such suggestions of religious blending, pluralism or enculturation may not be surprising to those familiar

with anthropological studies of Christianity over the past 30 years, I assert that this point needs to be affirmed with respect to Pentecostal and Evangelical Christianity, specifically regarding Indigenous communities and converts.

Overall, it seems that Pentecostalism—perhaps by being more open to recognizing existence of spirits, possession, miracles and paranormal activities than established churches had been during much of the 20th century—is more open to validating and incorporating (even if only as the Devil or witchcraft, but also, it appears, more positively) aspects of Cree spirituality than these other churches. Ethnographically, it appears that the weight of the argument lies with a hypothesis of Pentecostalism being potentially embedded within, rather than arrayed against, traditional culture. Of course, this is not how everyone in the north (or south) would understand the situation. However, where we do see opposition and difference, these are often expressed by Pentecostals through witchcraft allegations, precisely within an overall ontological stance that explicitly recognizes the power (and authority?) of shamans and spirits.

Conclusion

Many Cree have stated to me unequivocally that they do not consider Cree Spirituality or animism as a religion, but rather as a “way of life.” Taken seriously, this observation has the potential to pose major problems to existing anthropological categories. For one thing, it is hard to see why *converting to* a new religion would necessarily cause one to reject one’s culture, since one cannot necessarily *convert out of* something that is not a religion. This problem reflects a theoretical debate over whether Christianity is principally a set of relatively universal beliefs and values (Robbins 2007, Keane 2007) or whether its experience is best understood through pre-existing native categories and perspectives (Crépeau and Bousquet 2012, Vilaça and Wright 2009).

As John A. Cardinal’s remarks paradoxically suggested (when a few of his utterances on the topic had been considered), and as Adrian Jacobs and other Indigenous Pentecostal theologians have, perhaps surprisingly, elucidated, Indigenous Pentecostals are not monolithically against their culture, or even their traditional religion; however, they are very interested in the creation and maintenance of boundaries around certain beliefs and practices.

To the extent that religious practices and discourses represent or entail boundaries between or within individuals, groups, cultures, or subcultures, perhaps they may be thought of as a portal with the capability to open and close (an idea expressed in Westman 2008 and 2012a,

which I develop further here). That is, rather than being implacably against their culture, Indigenous Pentecostals use their religion by turns to establish linkages and boundaries; boundaries between themselves and their non-Pentecostal Indigenous counterparts (openness or closedness toward certain elements of the relevant Indigenous culture); between themselves and non-Indigenous people (openness or closedness toward certain elements of Euro-American culture or subcultures); between themselves and spirits (openness toward some shamanically influenced states, practices, and terminology, closedness toward others). Such pluralistic polarities occur at the level of the individual as well as the congregation and community. Finally, it is also true that, from time to time, Indigenous people may find themselves both within and, perhaps to some extent, against cultural and theological practices seen in the broader (non-Indigenous) Pentecostal community (Smith 2008:108-109), as well as within and against the diverse cultures of their own communities. And yet, at certain moments, as Smith states, the divisions may fall away, leaving only God (or *Man’tow*, as my Cree Pentecostal friends would say), who is beyond culture.

Thus, the cultural discontinuities entailed in Pentecostal conversion in northern communities may be both somewhat less fractious and considerably more complex than has been documented to date. As such, understanding this phenomenon requires a double vision of continuity and disjuncture analytically, and a focus on both religion and politics (including Indigenous political and religious systems and structures) methodologically.

Pentecostalism allows Cree people an institution through which they can feel more Canadian, while paradoxically concentrating ritual, ecclesiastical and political power in Cree hands, largely away from Euro-Canadian surveillance (Preston 1975:122-123; Waugh 1996:301), and promoting Cree language and literacy through ritual. In some circumstances, ritual practices resemble those of shamanism or animism and appear to draw some of their affective power from this association. Many Cree Pentecostals would deny the similarity to shamanism (*manitokewin* would be one translation) in some contexts, while acknowledging it in others. Multiple analysts have documented the flexibility of some Pentecostals on many points relating to Indigenous culture, sometimes in incorporating traditional practices or symbols (including sacred incense and drumming) that may be firmly rejected among other congregations. Thus, while Indigenous culture is a subject of vital importance in Pentecostal discourse, its meaning in relation to Pentecostalism is not fixed. It appears, in general, that Pentecostal Indigenous

When one looks beyond given utterances and events denoting some perhaps inevitable conflicts (such as the Flo Ellers, Qikiqtarjuaq, or Redfern Mianscum bonfire incidents, or even some of my informants' remarks) to consider the broader context, what is emerging from my own research, and from many other cutting edge analyses on the indigenization of Pentecostalism that I have been discussing in detail throughout this article, is a picture of Indigenous Pentecostals moving between worlds: Indigenous and Euro-Canadian; Christian and animist; Catholic and Protestant; recovering and healed. Specifically, many elements of Pentecostal ritual practice are in direct consonance with Indigenous spiritual practices denoted as shamanism or animism. This is evident in spite of (and is partly notable because of) the explicit pronouncements of leaders and many adherents in opposition to shamanism and animism. Yet nevertheless, all this cannot be summed up with a diagnosis of being against Indigenous culture.

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